

THE ROMAN FORUM. (A restoration by Bühlmann and Wagner)

# A HISTORY OF ROME

BY

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GREECE," "ROME: ITS RISE AND FALL,"  
AND "A GENERAL HISTORY"

*SECOND REVISED EDITION*

GINN AND COMPANY

BOSTON • NEW YORK • CHICAGO • LONDON  
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The Athenæum Press  
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## PREFACE TO THE SECOND REVISED EDITION

The present volume comprises the chapters on Rome and the Romano-German period of the second revised edition of my *Ancient History*, with only slight changes in the system of cross references to render the book independent of the oriental and Greek chapters.

P. V. N. M.

COLLEGE HILL, CINCINNATI



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# A HISTORY OF ROME

## PART I

### FIRST PERIOD—ROME AS A KINGDOM

#### CHAPTER I

##### ITALY AND ITS EARLY INHABITANTS

**1. Divisions of the Italian Peninsula.** The Italian peninsula is generally conceived as consisting of three sections — Northern, Central, and Southern Italy. The first comprises the great basin of the river Po (*Padus*), lying between the Alps and the Apennines. In ancient times this part of Italy included three districts, namely, Liguria, Gallia Cisalpina, and Venetia. Liguria embraced the south-western and Venetia the northeastern part of Northern Italy. Gallia Cisalpina lay between these two districts, occupying the finest portion of the valley of the Po. It received its name, which means "Gaul on this [the Italian] side of the Alps," from the Gallic tribes that about the fifth century before our era found their way over the mountains and settled upon these rich lands.

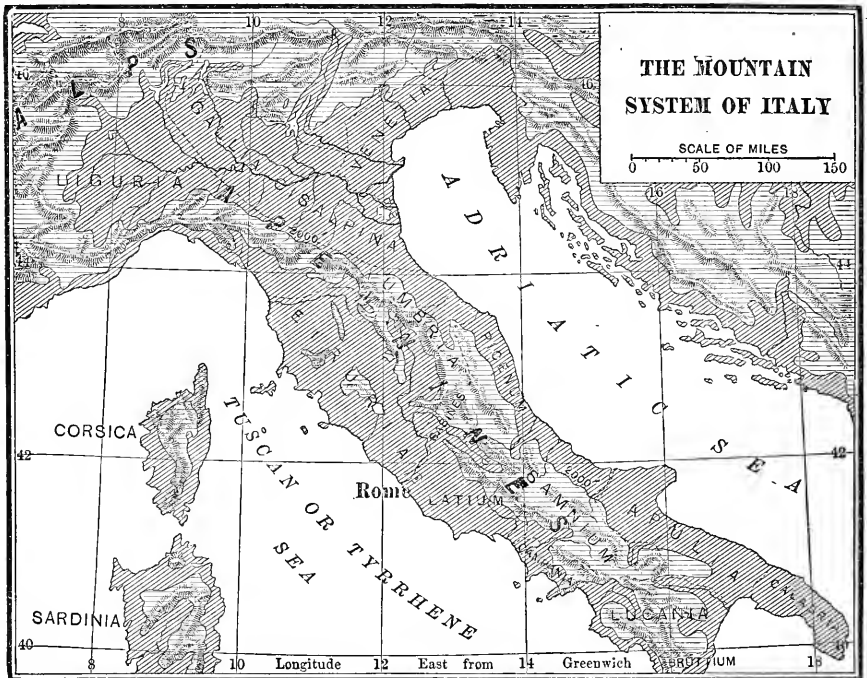
The countries of Central Italy were Etruria, Latium, and Campania, facing the Western or Tyrrhenian Sea; Umbria and Picenum, looking out over the Eastern or Adriatic Sea; and Samnium and the country of the Sabines, occupying the rough mountain districts of the Apennines.

Southern Italy comprised the ancient districts of Apulia, Lucania, Calabria, and Bruttium. Calabria<sup>1</sup> formed the "heel," and Bruttium

<sup>1</sup> During the Middle Ages this name was transferred to the toe of the peninsula, and this forms the Calabria of to-day.

the "toe," of the bootlike peninsula. The coast region of Southern Italy, as we have already learned, was called Magna Græcia, or "Great Greece," on account of the number and importance of the Greek cities that during the period of Hellenic supremacy were established on these shores.

The large island of Sicily, lying just off the mainland on the south, may be regarded simply as a detached fragment of Italy, so intimately has its history been connected with that of the peninsula.

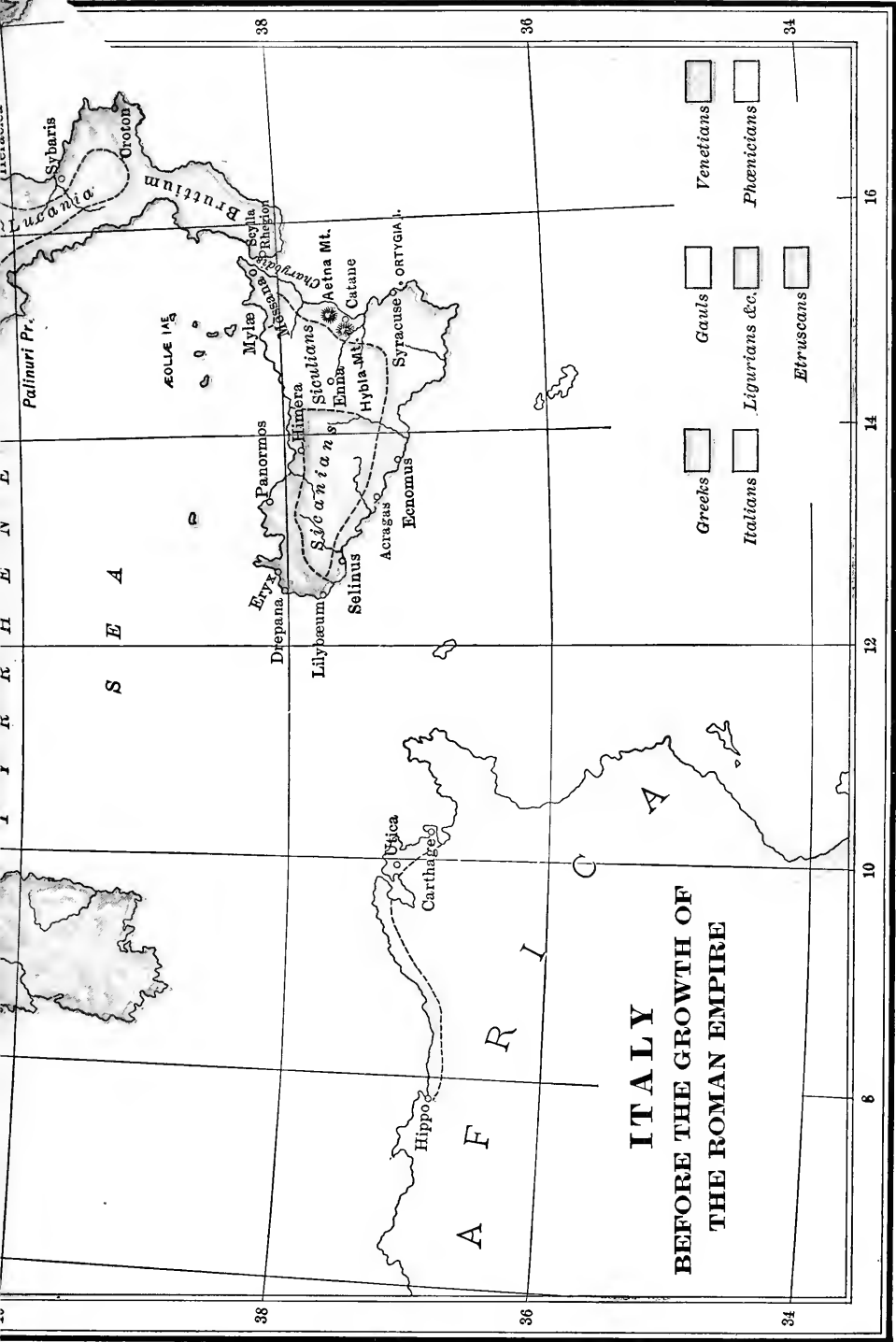


**2. Mountains, Rivers, and Harbors.** Italy, like the other two peninsulas of Southern Europe, — Greece and Spain, — has a high mountain barrier, the Alps, along its northern frontier. Corresponding to the Pindus range in Greece, the Apennines run as a great central ridge through the peninsula. Eastward of the ancient Latium they spread out into broad uplands, which in early times nourished a race of hardy mountaineers, who incessantly harried the territories of the more civilized lowlanders of Latium and Campania. Thus the physical conformation of this part of the peninsula shaped large











sections of Roman history, just as in the case of Scotland the physical contrast between the north and the south was reflected for centuries in the antagonisms of Highlanders and Lowlanders.

Italy has only one really great river, the Po, which drains the large northern plain, already mentioned, lying between the Alps and the Apennines. The streams running down the eastern slope of the Apennines are short and of little volume. Among the rivers draining the western slopes of the Apennines, the one possessing the greatest historic interest is the Tiber, on the banks of which Rome arose. North of this stream is the Arno (*Arnus*), which watered a part of the old Etruria, and south of it, the Liris, one of the chief rivers of Campania.

The finest Italian harbors, of which that of Naples is the most celebrated, are on the western coast. The eastern coast is precipitous, with few good havens. Italy thus faces the west. What makes it important for us to notice this circumstance is the fact that Greece faces the east, and that thus these two peninsulas, as the historian Mommsen expresses it, turn their backs to each other. This brought it about that Rome and the cities of Greece had almost no dealings with one another for many centuries.

**3. Early Inhabitants of Italy: the Etruscans, the Greeks, and the Italians.** There were in early historic times three chief races in Italy — the Etruscans, the Greeks, and the Italians. They had all, save the Greeks, found their way into the peninsula in prehistoric times.

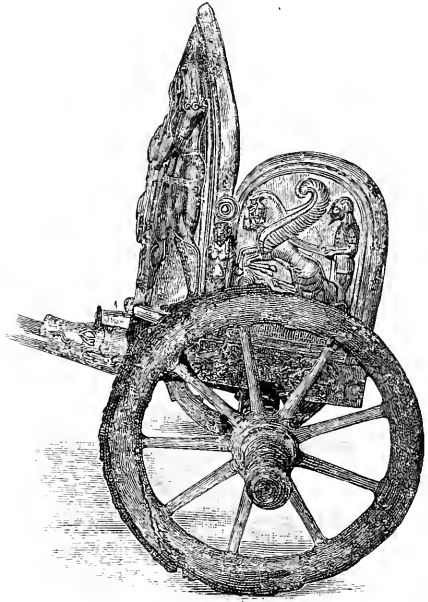


FIG. 1. AN ETRUSCAN CHARIOT<sup>1</sup>  
(From a photograph)

<sup>1</sup> This interesting memorial of Etruscan art was acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of New York City at a cost of \$48,000. It was found in an ancient Etruscan cemetery (1901). Almost every part of the chariot, including the wheels, was sheathed in figured bronze. The relic probably dates from the seventh century B.C.

The Etruscans, a wealthy, cultured, and seafaring people of uncertain race and origin, dwelt in Etruria, now called Tuscany after them.<sup>1</sup> They seem to have come into Italy from the east by way of the sea. Before the rise of the Roman people they were the leading race in the peninsula. Certain elements in their culture lead us to believe that they had learned much from the cities of Magna Græcia. The Etruscans in their turn became the teachers of the early Romans and imparted to them certain elements of civilization, including military usages, hints in the art of building, and various religious ideas and rites.

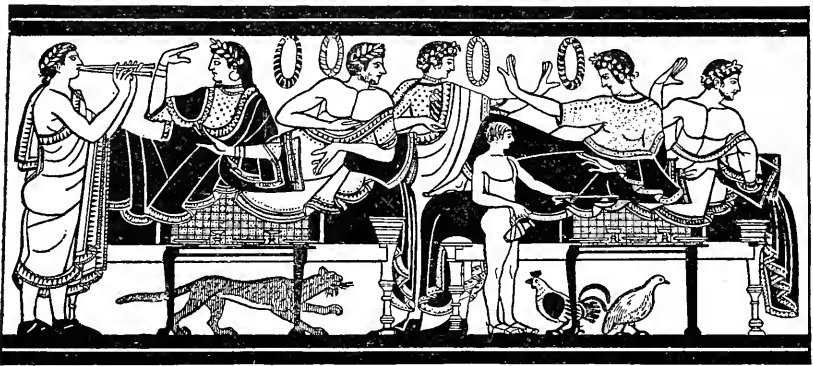


FIG. 2. WALL PAINTING OF AN ETRUSCAN BANQUET

From an Etruscan tomb of the fifth century B.C. This cut illustrates, among other things, the state of art among the Etruscans at that early date. Banqueting scenes are favorite representations on Etruscan tombs, sarcophagi, and funeral urns. The participators "were represented in the height of social enjoyment to symbolize the bliss on which their spirits had entered" (Dennis, *Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria*)

With the Greek cities in Southern Italy and in Sicily we have already formed an acquaintance. Through the medium of these cultured communities the Romans were taught the use of letters and given valuable suggestions in matters of law and constitutional government.

The Italians, peoples of Indo-European speech, embraced many tribes or communities (Latins, Umbrians, Sabines, Samnites, etc.) that occupied nearly all Central and a considerable part of Southern Italy. They were kin to the Greeks and brought with them into the peninsula, where they probably mixed with an aboriginal population,

<sup>1</sup> In early times they had settlements in Northern Italy and in Campania.

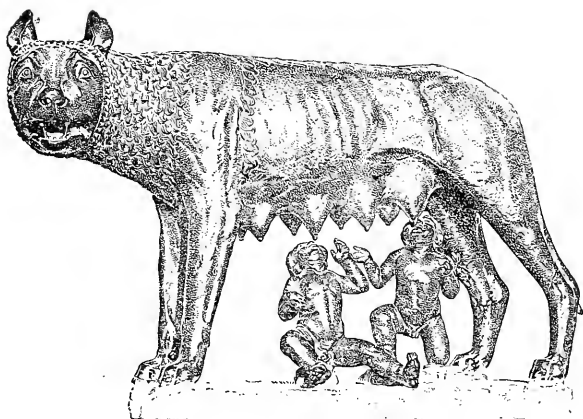
those customs, manners, beliefs, and institutions that formed the common possession of the Indo-European peoples. Their life was for the most part that of shepherds and farmers.

The most important of the Italian peoples were the Latins, who dwelt in Latium; and the most important of the Latins were the Romans. Concerning the beginnings of early Rome, its society, government, and religion, and the fortunes of the city under its later kings, we shall give a brief account in the next chapter.

**Selections from the Sources.** Munro's *Source Book of Roman History*, pp. 2-4. The teacher will find this admirable collection of extracts from the sources an invaluable aid in imparting a sense of life and reality to the story of ancient Rome.

**References (Modern).** MOMMSEN, vol. i, chaps. i, ii. FREEMAN, *Historical Geography of Europe*, vol. i (text), pp. 7-9, 43-49. TOZER, *Classical Geography*, chaps. ix, x. MERIVALE, vol. iv, pp. 414-416 (for some interesting observations on the evidence afforded by ancient geographical names of the wooded character of the districts about Rome in early times). HOW and LEIGH, *History of Rome*, chaps. i, ii. SHUCKBURGH, *History of Rome*, chaps. ii, iii. ALLCROFT and MASOM, *Tutorial History of Rome*, pp. 1-18. DENNIS, *The Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria*, vol. i, introduction (the author probably exaggerates the debt which the early civilization of Rome owed to the preceding culture of Etruria). LELAND, *Etruscan-Roman Remains*.

**Topics for Class Reports.** 1. Geographical conditions tending to make the history of Italy different from that of Greece: Freeman, *Historical Geography of Europe*, vol. i (text), pp. 7-9. 2. Explain the historian Freeman's statement that "the course of all history has been determined by the geological fact that certain hills by the Tiber were lower and nearer together than the other hills of Latium." 3. "While the Grecian peninsula is turned towards the east, the Italian is turned towards the west" (MommSEN); show the influence of this geographical fact on the history of each land.



## CHAPTER II

### ROME AS A KINGDOM

#### I. THE BEGINNINGS OF ROME

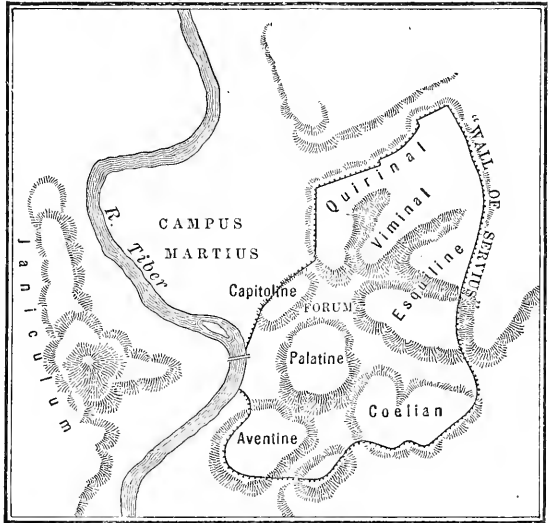
**4. Latium and the Latin League.** At the opening of the historic period, Latium, the "flat country," as the name probably signifies, lying south of the lower course of the Tiber, was dotted with strongly fortified hill-towns or petty city-states, like those of early Greece. In some cases at least a great part of the families forming one of these little hill-states lived in hamlets scattered over the territory of the city, in order that they might be near the fields they ploughed or the common pastures upon which they herded their flocks. The walled town on the hill served as a common refuge for the villagers in times of danger. It was also here that they held their markets and religious festivals. According to tradition there were in all Latium in prehistoric times thirty of these hill-towns. These had formed an alliance among themselves known as the Latin League.

**5. Early Rome.** Among these hill-towns was one named Rome, situated on a cluster of low hills on the left bank of the Tiber, about fifteen miles from the sea. At the dawn of history the leadership in the Latin League was held by this city.<sup>1</sup> Rome, which was

<sup>1</sup> In earlier times the leadership was held by Alba Longa, a city on the isolated Alban Mount.

destined to play such a great rôle in history, had been formed by the union in prehistoric times of three or more settlements, the dwellings of which were upon the slopes or at the foot of the hills just mentioned. Pressed probably by common enemies, they had come to unite on equal terms to form a single city-state, and had learned to call themselves by the same name — Romans. The early union of these little communities was a matter of great moment in the history of Rome. Contributing to make her first in numbers and strength among all the Latin city-states, it helped to lay the basis of her greatness and foreshadowed her marvelous political fortunes.

**6. Influence of Commerce upon the Growth of Early Rome.** Besides the early happy union of the several hill-villages, other circumstances without doubt contributed to the early and rapid growth of Rome. Among these a prominent place



THE SEVEN HILLS OF ROME

"The course of all history [has] been determined by the geological fact that certain hills by the Tiber were lower and nearer together than the other hills of Latium." — Freeman

must be given to the advantages in the way of trade and commerce afforded by its fortunate situation upon the Tiber. Its distance from the sea protected it against the depredations of the pirates who in early times swarmed in the Mediterranean and swept away the cattle and the crops from the fields of the coast settlements, while its location on the chief stream of Central Italy naturally made it the center of the lucrative trade of a wide reach of inland territory bordering upon the Tiber and its tributaries. Furthermore, this position upon a navigable river and not too far away from the sea gave it control of an important sea-borne traffic.

## II. SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENT

**7. The Roman Family; the Worship of Ancestors.** At the base of Roman society and forming its smallest unit was the family. This was a very different group from that which among us bears the same name. The typical Roman family consisted of the father (*paterfamilias*) and mother, the sons together with their wives and sons, and the unmarried daughters. When a daughter married she became a member of the family to which her husband belonged.

The most important feature or element of this family group was the unrestrained authority (*potestas*) of the father. In early times his power over every member of the family was in law absolute, though custom required that in cases involving severe punishment he should seek the advice of a council of near relatives. He could for misconduct sell a son of mature years into slavery or even put him to death (see sect. 33).

The father was the high priest of the family, for the family had a common worship. This was the cult of domestic divinities and the spirits of ancestors. These latter were believed to linger near the old hearth. If provided with frequent offerings of meat and drink, they would, it was thought, watch over the living members of the family and aid and prosper them in their daily work and in all their undertakings. If they were neglected, however, these spirits became restless and suffered pain, and in their anger would bring trouble in some form upon their undutiful kinsmen.

It was particularly this worship of ancestors that made the Roman family so exclusive, and that caused it to close its doors against all strangers; for the spirits of its dead members could be served only by their own kith and kin. By a certain religious ceremony, however, a stranger could be adopted into a family, and thus could acquire the same rights as its members by birth or by marriage to participate in its worship and festivals.

When the father died the sons became free, and each in his own household now came to exercise the full authority that the father had held.



**8. The Place of the Family in Roman History.** It would be difficult to overestimate the influence of the family upon the history and destiny of Rome. It was the cradle of at least some of those splendid virtues of the early Romans that contributed so much to the strength and greatness of Rome, and that helped to give her the dominion of the world. It was in the atmosphere of the family that were nourished in the Roman youth the virtues of obedience, of deference to authority, and of submission to law and custom. When the youth became a citizen, obedience to magistrates and respect for law were with him an instinct and indeed almost a religion. And, on the other hand, the exercise of the parental authority in the family taught the Roman how to command as well as how to obey — how to exercise authority with wisdom, moderation, and justice.

**9. Dependents of the Family: Clients and Slaves.** Besides those members constituting the family proper there were attached to it usually a number of dependents. These were the clients and slaves. The client was a person standing in a semiservile relation to the head of the family, who was called his patron. The class of clients was probably made up largely of homeless refugees or strangers from other cities, or of freed slaves dwelling in their former master's house. They were free to engage in business at Rome and to accumulate property, though whatever they gathered was legally the property of the patron.

The duty of the patron was, in general, to look after the interests of his client, especially to represent him before the legal tribunals. The duty of the client, on the other hand, was faithfulness to his patron, and the making of contributions of money to aid him in meeting unusual expenses.

The slaves constituted merely a part of the family property. There were only a few slaves in the early Roman family, and these were held for service chiefly within the home and not in the fields. They relieved the mother and daughters of the coarser work of the household. It was not until later times, when luxury crept into Rome, that the number of domestic slaves became excessively great (sect. 200).

**10. The Clan, the Curia, the Tribe, and the City.** Above the family stood the clan or gens. This was probably in the earliest times simply the expanded family, the members of which had outgrown the remembrance of their exact relationship. Yet they all believed themselves to have had a common ancestor and called themselves by his name, as the Fabii, the Claudii, the Julii, and so on. The gens, like the family, had a common altar.

The next largest group or division of the community was the curia, which, like the Greek phratry, was a "brotherhood," the members of which were united by the ties of religion and blood. This was the most important political division of the people in early Rome. Levies for the army were made by curiæ, and voting in the primitive assembly of the people, as we shall explain presently, was done by these same bodies. There were thirty curiæ in primitive Rome.

Above the curiæ was the tribe, the largest subdivision of the community. In early Rome there were three tribes, each comprising ten curiæ.

These several groups made up the community of early Rome. This city, like the cities of ancient Greece, was a city-state—that is, an independent sovereign body like a modern nation. As such it possessed a constitution and government, concerning which we will next give a short account.

**11. The King and the Senate.** At the head of the early Roman state stood a king, the father of his people, holding essentially the same relation to them that the father of a family held to his household. He was at once ruler of the nation, commander of the army, and judge and high priest of his people. He was preceded by servants called lictors, each bearing a bundle of rods (the fasces) with an ax bound therein, the symbol of his power to punish by flogging and by putting to death.

Next to the king stood the Senate, a body composed of the "fathers," or heads of the ancient clans of the community. Two important functions of the Senate were to give counsel to the king, and to cast the decisive vote on all measures passed by the assembly of citizens.

**12. The Popular Assembly.** The popular assembly (*comitia curiata*) comprised all the freemen of Rome. The manner of taking a vote in this assembly should be noted, for the usage here was followed in all the later popular assemblies of the republican period. The voting was not by individuals but by curiæ; that is, each curia had one vote, and the measure before the body was carried or lost according as a majority of the curiæ voted for or against it.

It should be further noted that this assembly was not a representative body, like a modern legislature, but a primary assembly, that is, a meeting like a New England town meeting. All of the later assemblies at Rome were like this primitive assembly. The Romans never learned, or at least never employed, the principle of representation, without which device government by the people in the great states of the present day would be impossible. How important the bearing of this was upon the political fortunes of Rome we shall learn later.

**13. The Rights of Roman Citizenship.** The rights of the Roman citizen were divided into private rights and public rights. The chief private rights were two, namely, the right of trade (*jus commercii*) and the right of marriage (*jus connubii*). The right of trade or commerce was the right to acquire, to hold, and to bequeath property (both personal and landed) according to the forms of the Roman law. This in the ancient city was an important right and privilege.<sup>1</sup> The right of marriage was the "right of contracting a full and religious marriage." Such a marriage could take place in early Rome only between patricians, or persons of noble birth.

The three chief public or political rights of the Roman citizen were the right of voting in the public assemblies (*jus suffragii*), the right to hold office (*jus honorum*), and the right of appeal from the decision of a magistrate to the people (*jus provocationis*).

These rights taken together constituted the most highly valued rights and prerogatives of the Roman citizen. What we should particularly notice is that the Romans adopted the practice of bestowing these rights in installments, so to speak. For instance, the inhabitants of one vanquished city would be given a part of

<sup>1</sup> In some modern states aliens are not allowed to acquire landed property; in Roman terms there is withheld from them a part of the *jus commercii*.

the private rights of citizenship, those of another perhaps all of this class of rights, while upon the inhabitants of a third place would be bestowed all the rights, both private and public. This usage created many different classes of citizens in the Roman state; and this, as will appear later, was one of the most important matters connected with the internal history of Rome.

**14. Patricians and Plebeians.** In early Rome there were two classes or orders known as *patricians* and *plebeians*.<sup>1</sup> The patricians formed the hereditary nobility of the state. They alone possessed all the rights of citizenship as enumerated in the preceding section. Some of the private rights, as we shall see directly, they shared with the plebeians, but the chief political rights they jealously guarded as the sacred patrimony of their own order.

The plebeians (from *plebs*, "the multitude") were the humbler members of the community. Some of this class were shopkeepers, artisans, and manual laborers living in Rome; but the larger number were small landowners living outside the city in scattered hamlets, and tilling with their own hands their little farms of a few acres in extent.

From what has already been said of them, it will be seen that these plebeians possessed at least one of the most important rights of Roman citizenship, namely, the private right of engaging in trade. But from most of the other rights and privileges of the full citizen they were wholly shut out. They could not contract a legal marriage with one of the patrician order. They could not hold office or appeal from the decision of a magistrate. A large part of the early history of Rome as a republic is made up of the struggles of these plebeians to better their economic condition and to secure for themselves social and political equality with the patricians.

### III. RELIGION

**15. The Place of Religion in Roman History.** In Rome, as in the ancient cities of Greece, religion, aside from the domestic and local cults, was an affair of the state. The magistrates of the city

<sup>1</sup> There have been many theories as to the origin of this division in the population of primitive Rome, but nothing certain is known about it. It is possible that the patricians were the offspring of the invading Indo-Europeans (sect. 3), and the plebeians the descendants of the subjected non-Aryan people. See Frank, *Roman Imperialism*, p. 12.

possessed a sort of sacerdotal or priestly character ; and since almost every official act was connected in some way with the rites of the temple or the sacrifices of the altar, it happens that the political history of the Romans is closely interwoven with their religion.

**16. The Practical and Legal Character of the Religion.** The Roman thought of the gods as watchful of the conduct of their worshipers, and as interested in their affairs. Hence the Roman was in his way very religious, and exceedingly scrupulous in rendering to the divinities the worship due them. He did not, however, serve his gods for naught ; he expected from them a full equivalent for the sacrificial victims that he offered them, for the incense that he burned upon their altars, for the gifts he hung up in their temples, and for the costly games and spectacles he provided for their entertainment in the circus and the amphitheater.

And the gods, on their part, were ready to meet this expectation. They gave counsel and help to their faithful followers, and secured them good harvests and a successful issue of their undertakings. On the other hand, neglect angered the gods and caused them to bring upon their unfaithful worshipers all kinds of troubles and calamities — dissensions within the state, defeat of their armies in the field, drought, fire and flood, pestilence and famine.

Another noteworthy feature of the Roman religion was its legal character ; for the Roman religion was a sort of contract between the gods and their worshipers. If the worshipers performed their part of this contract, then the gods were bound to fulfill theirs.

But the Roman was ever ready to take advantage of a flaw in a contract and to overreach in a bargain, and making his gods like unto himself, he imagined that they would act in a like manner. Hence the anxious care with which he performed all the prescribed religious rites, in order to insure that there should be no flaw in the proceedings which might be taken advantage of by the gods. Plutarch says that sometimes a sacrifice would be repeated as many as thirty times, because each time there was some little oversight or mistake.

**17. The Chief Roman Deities.** At the head of the Roman pantheon stood Jupiter, identical in all essential attributes with the Hellenic Zeus. He was the special protector of the Roman

people. To him, together with Juno his wife, and Minerva goddess of wisdom, was consecrated a magnificent temple upon the summit of the Capitoline Hill, overlooking the forum and the city.

Mars, the god of war, was the favorite deity and the fabled father of the Roman race, who were fond of calling themselves the "Children of Mars." They proved themselves worthy offspring of the war-god. Martial games and festivals were celebrated in his honor during the first month of the Roman year — the month which bore, and still bears, in his honor, the name of March.



FIG. 3. HEAD OF JANUS. (From a Roman coin)

Janus was a double-faced deity to whom the month of January was sacred, as were also all gates and doors. The gates of his temple were always kept open in time of war and shut in time of peace.

The fire upon the household hearth was regarded as the symbol of the goddess Vesta. Her worship was a favorite one with the Romans. The nation, too, as a single great family, had a common national hearth in

the temple of Vesta, where the sacred fires were kept burning from generation to generation by six virgins, daughters of the Roman state.

**18. Oracles and Divination.** The Romans, like the Greeks, thought that the will of the gods was communicated to men by means of oracles, and by strange sights, unusual events, or singular coincidences. There were no true oracles at Rome. The Romans, therefore, often had recourse to those of the Greeks. Particularly in great emergencies did they seek advice from the celebrated oracle of Apollo at Delphi. From Etruria was introduced the art of the haruspices, or soothsayers, which consisted in discovering the will of the gods by the appearance of the inward parts of victims slain for the sacrifices.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This art came originally from Babylonia, probably by way of Asia Minor.

**19. The Sacred Colleges.** The four chief sacred colleges or societies were the Keepers of the Sibylline Books, the College of Augurs, the College of Pontiffs, and the College of the Herald.

The Sibylline Books were volumes written in Greek, the origin of which was lost in fable. They were kept in a stone chest in a vault beneath the Capitoline temple, and special custodians were appointed to take charge of them and interpret them. The books were consulted only in times of extreme danger (sect. 58).

The duty of the members of the College of Augurs was to interpret the omens, or auspices, — which were casual sights or appearances, particularly the flight of birds, — by which means it was believed that Jupiter made known his will. Great skill was required in the "taking of the auspices," as it was called. No business of importance, public or private, was entered upon without the auspices being first consulted to ascertain whether they were favorable.

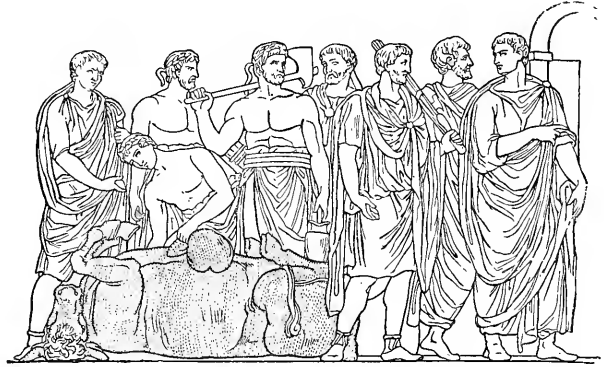


FIG. 4. DIVINING BY MEANS OF THE APPEARANCE OF THE ENTRAILS OF A SACRIFICIAL VICTIM

This was with the Romans a usual way of foretelling future events

The College of Pontiffs was so called probably because one of the duties of its members was to keep in repair a certain bridge (*pons*) over the Tiber. This guild was the most important of all the religious institutions of the Romans; for to the pontiffs belonged the superintendence of all religious matters. The head of the college was called *Pontifex Maximus*, or "Chief Bridge Builder," which title was assumed by the Roman emperors, and after them by the Christian bishops of Rome; and thus the name has come down to our times.

The College of Herald (*Fetiales*) had the care of all public matters pertaining to foreign nations. Thus, if the Roman people

had suffered any wrong from another state, and war was determined upon, then it was the duty of a herald to proceed to the frontier of the enemy's country and hurl over the boundary a spear dipped in blood. This was a declaration of war. The Romans were very careful in the observance of this ceremony.<sup>1</sup>

**20. Sacred Games and Festivals.** The Romans had many religious games and festivals. Prominent among these were the so-called Circensian games, or games of the circus, which were very similar to the sacred games of the Greeks. They consisted, in the main, of chariot-racing, wrestling, foot-racing, and various other athletic contests.

These festivals, as in the case of those of the Greeks, had their origin in the belief that the gods delighted in the exhibition of feats of skill, strength, or endurance; that their anger might be appeased by such spectacles; or that they might by the promise of games be persuaded to lend aid to mortals in great emergencies.<sup>2</sup> At the opening of the year it was customary for the Roman magistrates, in the name of the state, to promise to the gods games and festivals, provided good crops, protection from pestilence, and victory to their arms were vouchsafed to the Roman people during the year.

Towards the close of the Republic these games lost much of their religious character, and at last became degraded into mere brutal shows given by ambitious leaders for the purpose of winning popularity.

The *Saturnalia* were a festival held in December in honor of Saturn, the god of sowing. It was an occasion on which all classes, including the slaves, who were allowed to act during the celebration like freemen, gave themselves up to riotous amusements; hence the significance we attach to the word *saturnalian*. The well-known Roman carnival of to-day is a survival of the ancient Saturnalia.

<sup>1</sup> Besides the members of the learned colleges there were priests, called *flamines*, who had the oversight of the worship of Jupiter, Mars, Quirinus, and other special deities.

<sup>2</sup> "The games were an entertainment offered to the guests [the gods, who were "the guests of honor,"] which were as certainly believed to be gratifying to their sight as a review of troops or a deer hunt to a modern European sovereign."—WHEELER, *Dionysos and Immortality*, p. 11



#### IV. ROME UNDER THE KINGS (LEGENDARY DATE 753-509 B. C.)

**21. The Legendary Kings.** The early government of Rome was a monarchy. The regal period, according to tradition, embraced nearly two and a half centuries (from 753<sup>1</sup> to 509 B.C.). To span this period the legends of the Romans tell of the reigns of seven kings — Romulus, the founder of Rome; Numa, the lawgiver; Tullus Hostilius and Ancus Martius, both conquerors; Tarquinius Priscus, the great builder; Servius Tullius, the reorganizer of the government and second founder of the state; and Tarquinius Superbus, the haughty tyrant whose oppressions led to the abolition by the people of the office of king.<sup>2</sup>

The traditions of the doings of these monarchs and of what happened to them blend hopelessly fact and fable. We cannot be quite sure even as to their names. Respecting Roman affairs, however, under the last three rulers (the Tarquins), who were of Etruscan origin, some important things are related, the substantial truth of which we may rely upon with a fair degree of certainty; and these matters we shall notice in the following sections.

**22. Growth of Rome under the Tarquins.** The Tarquins extended their authority over much of Latium. The position of supremacy thus given Rome was attended by the rapid growth of the city in population and importance. The original walls soon became too strait for the increasing multitudes; new ramparts were built, — tradition says under the direction of the king Servius Tullius, — which, with a great circuit of seven miles, swept around the entire cluster of seven hills on the south bank of the Tiber, whence the name that Rome acquired of "the City of the Seven Hills."

A large tract of marshy ground between the chief hills was reclaimed by means of the *Cloaca Maxima*, a great sewer or drain,

<sup>1</sup> Modern excavations and research have established the fact that there was a settlement on the site of Rome long before the eighth century, but it is necessary to keep in mind the traditional year (753 B.C.) of the founding of the city, because the Romans reckoned dates from that year.

<sup>2</sup> For some of the best-known legends of early Rome, see *Legends of Early Rome*, at the end of this chapter.

which at a later period was covered with a vault of masonry. The land thus reclaimed became the *Forum*, the public market place of the early city. At one end of this public square, as we should call it, was the *Comitium*, an inclosure where assemblies for voting purposes were held. Standing on the dividing line between the Comitium and the Forum proper was the speakers' stand, later named the *Rostra*.<sup>1</sup> This assembling place was in later times enlarged and

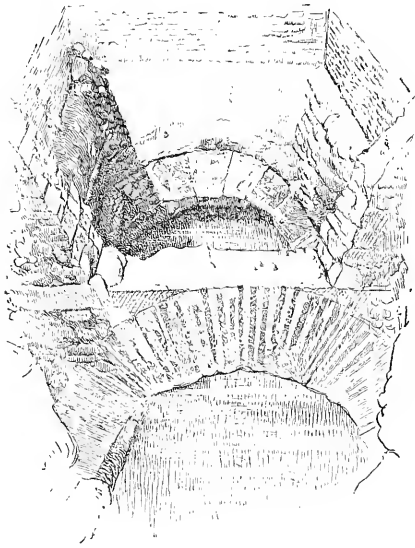


FIG. 5. THE CLOACA MAXIMA  
(From a photograph)

Until recently the existing arch work of the "great sewer" was believed to be of Etruscan origin, but excavations made in the Forum in 1903 prove that this dates from the later Republic

decorated with various monuments and surrounded with splendid buildings and porticoes. Here more was said, resolved upon, and done than upon any other spot in the ancient world.

**23. The Reforms of Servius Tullius: the Five Classes and the Four New Tribes.** It was the second king of the Etruscan house, Servius Tullius by name, to whom tradition attributes a most important change in the constitution of the Roman state.<sup>2</sup> He made property instead of birth, or membership in the primitive *curiæ* and tribes, the basis of the duties, particularly the military duties, of citizenship.

In the earliest times the army was composed of three thousand foot soldiers and three hundred horsemen, each of the three tribes furnishing one third of this number. Tradition affirms that this force had been doubled by Tarquinius Priscus. But the growing state — conquests had made additions both to the territory and the population

<sup>1</sup> So called because decorated with the beaks (*rostra*) of war galleys taken from enemies.

<sup>2</sup> The reform itself is an historical fact, but it is possible that it was not effected by the efforts of any particular king. It may have been the result of a long period of slow constitutional development.

of Rome—had come to need a larger military force than the original tribes alone could maintain. Servius Tullius increased the army by requiring all landowners between seventeen and sixty years of age to assume a place in the ranks. The whole body of persons thus made liable to military service was divided into five classes according to the amount of land each possessed. The largest landowners, most of whom at this time were patricians, were enrolled in the first three classes, and were required to provide themselves with heavy armor; the smaller proprietors, who made up the remaining two classes, were called upon to furnish themselves with only a light equipment.

At the same time, in place of the three old tribes there were now created four new ones, each including a part of the city area and also a part of the city territory beyond its walls.<sup>1</sup> Though these new divisions of the population were called tribes, still they were very different in character from the earlier divisions bearing this name. Membership in one of the old tribes was determined by birth or relationship, while membership in one of the new tribes was determined by place of residence.<sup>2</sup>



FIG. 6. ROMAN SOLDIER

**24. The Army; the Legion.** The unit of the military organization was the century, probably containing at this time, as the name (*centuria*) indicates, one hundred men.<sup>3</sup> Forty-two centuries were united to form the legion, which thus at this period probably numbered forty-two hundred men, its normal strength till towards the end of the Republic.

<sup>1</sup> Somewhat later, after the expulsion of the kings (sect. 27), these four tribes were confined to the city, and the territory outside was divided into seventeen new tribes, known as rural tribes.

<sup>2</sup> Thus these new tribes were like our wards or townships. As new territory was acquired by the Romans through conquest, new tribes were created, until there were finally thirty-five, which number was never exceeded.

<sup>3</sup> Later the number of the body was increased so that the term *century* lost all numerical significance.

The tactical formation of the legion was the old Grecian phalanx, which seems to have been borrowed from the Dorian cities of Magna Græcia. This legion phalanx had probably a front of five hundred men and a depth of six ranks. The heavy-equipped citizens made up the front ranks, the light-equipped the rear.

There were at the period of the Servian reforms four legions. Two, composed of the younger men, were for service in the field; the remaining two, made up of the older citizens, formed a sort of home guard. Besides the four legions there was a cavalry force of eighteen hundred men, made up of the richest landowners. This brought the total strength of the army, for both field and home service, up to about twenty thousand men.

**25. The Comitia Centuriata.** The assembling place of those liable to military service, thus organized into centuries and classes, was just outside the city walls, on a large plain called the *Campus Martius*, or Field of Mars. The meeting of these military orders was called the *comitia centuriata*, or the Assembly of Centuries. This body, in which the plebeians through the increase among them of the number of rich landowners gradually acquired great influence, came in the course of time to absorb most of the powers of the earlier assembly (*comitia curiata*).

**26. Importance of the Servian Reforms.** The reforms of Servius Tullius were an important step towards the establishment of social and political equality between the two great orders of the state — the patricians and the plebeians. The new constitution, indeed, as Mommsen says, assigned to the plebeians duties chiefly, and not rights; but being called upon to discharge the most important duties of citizens, it was not long before they demanded all the rights of citizens; and as the bearers of arms they were able to enforce their demands.<sup>1</sup>

**27. The Expulsion of the Kings.** The legends, as already noted, make Tarquinius Superbus the last king of Rome. He is represented as a monstrous tyrant, whose arbitrary acts caused both patricians and

<sup>1</sup> This reform movement at Rome was part of a revolution which seems to have been participated in by all the peoples of Greece and Italy who had reached the city stage of development. Thus, at just about the time that tradition represents Servius Tullius as effecting his reform at Rome, Clisthenes, the Athenian legislator, was instituting a similar reform in the constitution of Athens.

plebeians to unite and drive him and all his house into exile. This event, according to the Roman annalists, occurred in the year 509 B. C., only one year later than the expulsion of the tyrants from Athens.<sup>1</sup>

#### LEGENDS OF EARLY ROME<sup>2</sup>

**Tale of the Founding of Rome.** After Troy had been taken by the Greeks, the Trojan Æneas, led by the Fates, came in search of a new home to the Italian shores. First at a place called Lavinium, and later at Alba Longa, on the Alban Mount, there ruled a long line of his descendants. At length a usurper seized the throne, and caused the twin heir-princes, of whom the god Mars was declared to be the father, to be thrown into the Tiber. The cradle in which the babes were borne was cast upon the land by the strong current. Attracted by the cries of the children, a she-wolf directed her course to them, and with the greatest tenderness nursed them. Finally a shepherd, discovering the babes in the care of the wolf, took them to his home and reared them with his own children.

When grown to be men, Romulus and Remus, — for so the brothers were named, — having put to death the usurper, resolved to build a city on the spot where they had been exposed and rescued. Unhappily, in a quarrel as to which should give name to the new city, Remus was killed by his brother. Thus Romulus was left as the sole founder of the city, which was called Rome after him.

**The Romans Capture the Sabine Women for Wives.** The new city, having been made by Romulus a sort of asylum or refuge for the discontented and the outlawed of all the surrounding states, soon became very populous, and more powerful than either Lavinium or Alba Longa. But there were few women among its inhabitants. Romulus therefore sent embassies to the neighboring cities to ask that his people might take wives from among them. But the adjoining nations were averse to entering into marriage alliances with the men of the new city. Thereupon the Roman youth determined to secure by violence what they could not obtain by other means. Romulus appointed a great festival, and invited to the celebration all the surrounding peoples. The Sabines especially came in great numbers with their wives and daughters. In the midst of the games, the Roman youth, at a preconcerted signal, rushed among the spectators, and seized and carried off to their homes the daughters of their guests. This violation of the laws of hospitality led to a war on the part of the injured Sabines against the Romans. Peace, however, was made between the combatants by the young women themselves,

<sup>1</sup> See *Eastern Nations and Greece*, (2nd Rev. Ed.), sect. 203.

<sup>2</sup> From Livy's *History of Rome*, i, ii. In this connection read Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*.

who, as the wives of their captors, had become reconciled to their lot. The two nations were now combined into one, the Sabines removing to one of the Seven Hills. Each people, however, retained its own king; but upon the death of the Sabine king, Titus Tatius, Romulus ruled over both the Romans and the Sabines. During a thunderstorm Romulus was caught up to the skies, and Numa Pompilius ruled in his stead.

**The Combat between the Horatii and the Curiatii.** In process of time a war broke out between Rome and Alba Longa. It might be called a civil war, for the Romans and Albans were alike descendants of the Trojan exiles. The two armies were ready to engage in battle when it was proposed that the controversy should be decided by a combat between three Alban brothers named the Curiatii, and three Roman brothers known as the Horatii. The nation whose champions gained the victory was to rule over the other. On the signal being given, the combat began. Two of the Romans soon fell lifeless, and the three Curiatii were wounded. The remaining Roman, who was unhurt, was now surrounded by the three Albans. To avoid their united attack, he turned and fled, thinking that they, being wounded, would almost certainly become separated in following him. This did actually happen; and when Horatius, looking back as he fled, saw the Curiatii to be following him at different intervals, he turned himself about and fell upon his pursuers, one after the other, and despatched them.

So in accordance with the terms of the treaty which the two cities had made, conditioned on the issue of the fight between the champions, Rome held dominion over Alba Longa. But the league between the Romans and the Albans was soon broken, and then the Romans, demolishing the houses of Alba Longa, carried off all the inhabitants to Rome, and incorporated them with the Roman state.<sup>1</sup>

**The Exploit of Horatius Cocles.** After the expulsion of the Tarquins from Rome, they besought Porsenna, king of Clusium, a powerful city of Etruria, to espouse their cause, and help them to regain the kingly power at Rome. Porsenna lent a favorable ear to their solicitations, and made war upon the Roman state. As his army drew near to Rome, all the people from the surrounding country hastened within the city gates. The bravery of a single man, Horatius Cocles, alone prevented the enemy from effecting an entrance into the city. This man was posted as a guard on the Sublician Bridge, which led across the Tiber from the citadel of the Janiculum. The Janiculum having been taken by the enemy, its defenders were retreating in great disorder across the bridge, and the victors following closer after. Horatius Cocles called after his fleeing companions to break down the bridge, while he held the pursuers at bay. Taking his stand at the farther

<sup>1</sup> For the sequel of this story, see Livy, i, 26.

entrance of the bridge, he, with the help of two comrades, held the enemy in check, while the structure was being destroyed. As the bridge fell with a crash into the stream, Cocles leaped into the water, and amidst a shower of darts swam in safety to the Roman side. Through his bravery he had saved Rome. His grateful countrymen erected a statue to his honor, and voted him a plot of land as large as he could plough in a single day.

**The Fortitude of Mucius Scævola.** Failing to take Rome by assault, Porsenna endeavored to reduce it by a regular siege. After the investment had been maintained for a considerable time, a Roman youth, Gaius Mucius by name, resolved to deliver the city from the presence of the besiegers by going into the camp of the enemy and killing Porsenna. Through a mistake, however, he slew the secretary of the king instead of the king himself. He was seized and brought into the presence of Porsenna, who threatened him with punishment by fire unless he made a full disclosure of the Roman plots. Mucius, to show the king how little he could be moved by threats, thrust his right hand into a flame that was near, and held it there unflinchingly until it was consumed. Porsenna was so impressed by the fortitude of the youth, that he dismissed him without punishment. From the loss of his right hand, Mucius received the surname of *Scævola*, "The Left-handed."

**Selections from the Sources.** PLUTARCH, *Romulus* and *Numa* (in the case of these particular lives the student will of course bear in mind that he is reading Roman folklore; but it is worth while for the student of Roman history to know what the Romans of later times themselves believed respecting their early kings). LIVY, i, ii (a choice may be made among the early legends). Munro's *Source Book*, pp. 4-19; Davis's *Readings* (Rome), pp. 5-15.

**Secondary Works.** MOMMSEN, vol. i, bk. i, chaps. iv-xv. COULANGES, *The Ancient City*, bk. i, chaps. i-iv, "Ancient Beliefs"; bk. ii, chap. i, "Religion was the Constituent Principle of the Ancient Family"; chap. x, "The Gens at Rome and in Greece." DURUY, vol. i, chaps. i, iv. HOW and LEIGH, *History of Rome*, pp. 20-52, 288-293. SEIGNOBOS (Fairly ed.), *History of the Roman People*, chaps. ii, iv. PELHAM, *Outlines of Roman History*, bk. i, chaps. ii, iii. IHNE, *Early Rome*. FOWLER, *The City-state of the Greeks and Romans*, chaps. ii, iii. MOREY, *Outlines of Roman Law*, chap. i, "The Organization of Early Roman Society." ABBOTT, *Roman Political Institutions*, chaps. i, ii. GREENIDGE, *Roman Public Life*, chap. i.

**Topics for Class Reports.** 1. The family cult and the *patria potestas*: Johnston, *The Private Life of the Romans*, pp. 28-32; Wilkins, *Roman Antiquities*, chap. iii. 2. The Roman character: Wilkins, *Roman Antiquities*, chap. i. 3. The position of women: Johnston, *The Private Life of the Romans*, pp. 64-66. 4. Prehistoric Rome: Lanciani, *Ancient Rome in the Light of Recent Discoveries*, chap. ii, "The Foundation and Prehistoric Life of Rome."

## SECOND PERIOD—ROME AS A REPUBLIC

(509–31 B. C.)

### CHAPTER III

#### THE EARLY REPUBLIC; PLEBEIANS SECURE EQUALITY WITH THE PATRICIANS

(509–367 B. C.)

**28. Republican Magistrates: the Consuls and the Dictator.** With the monarchy overthrown and the last king and his house banished from Rome, the people set to work to reorganize the government. In place of the king there were elected two patrician magistrates, called at first *prætors* or "leaders," but later, *consuls* or "colleagues." These magistrates were chosen for one year, and were invested with all the powers, save some priestly functions, that had been exercised by the king during the regal period. In public each consul was attended, as the king had been, by twelve lictors, each bearing the "dread fasces" (Fig. 7).

Each consul had the power of obstructing the acts or vetoing the commands of the other. This was called the "right of intercession." This division of authority weakened the executive, so that in times of great public danger it was necessary to supersede the consuls by the appointment of a special officer bearing the title of *dictator*, whose term of office was limited to six months, but whose power during this time was as unlimited as that of the king had been. The dictator was nominated by one of the consuls acting under an order of the Senate which must be obeyed. He was preceded by twenty-four lictors.

A consul could not be impeached, or reached by any legal or constitutional process, while in office; but after the expiration of his term he could be prosecuted for any misconduct or illegal act of which he



might have been guilty while holding his magistracy. This rule was applied to all the other magistrates of the Republic.

**29. The Right of Appeal Secured by the Valerian Law (509 B.C.).**

We have seen that virtually all the authority exercised by the king was transferred in undiminished measure to the consuls. But the very year of the overthrow of the regal power, the authority of the consuls was restricted in a most important respect. The consul Publius Valerius secured the passage of a law concerning appeals known as the Valerian Law, which forbade any magistrate, except a dictator, to put any Roman citizen to death without the sanction, on appeal, of the people in the Assembly of Centuries. This law, however, did not bind the consuls when they were at the head of the army outside the city. From this time on, the consular lictors, when accompanying the consuls within the city, removed the ax from the fasces, as a symbol that the power to execute there the death sentence upon any citizen had been taken away.

This right of appeal from the sentence of a magistrate in cases involving life and death was afterwards extended to cases of flogging, and thus it became a very great security to the citizen against unjust and cruel treatment at the hands of arbitrary magistrates. More than five hundred years after the enactment of this law Paul the



FIG. 7. LICTORS WITH FASCES

The symbolic fasces borne by these officers were probably of Etruscan origin. The Tarquins are said to have brought them to Rome along with other insignia of the kingly office

Apostle, having been flogged by his jailer, caused him to fall into great fear by sending him word that he had beaten openly and uncondemned a Roman citizen.<sup>1</sup>

**30. First Secession of the Plebeians (traditional date 494 B.C.).** The law of debt in early Rome was very harsh. During the period of disorder and war which followed the expulsion of the Tarquins, poor plebeians fell in debt to the wealthy class, and payment was exacted with heartless severity. A debtor became the absolute property of his creditor, who might sell him as a slave to pay the debt, and in some cases might even put him to death.

The situation was intolerable. The plebeians resolved to secede from Rome and build a new city for themselves on a neighboring eminence, known afterwards as the Sacred Mount. Having on one occasion been called to arms to repel an invasion, they refused to march out against the enemy, but instead marched away in a body from Rome to the spot selected beforehand, and began to make preparations for erecting new homes.

**31. The Covenant and the Tribunes.** The patricians well knew that such a division would prove ruinous to the state, and that the plebeians must be persuaded to give up their enterprise and come back to Rome. The consul Valerius was sent to treat with the insurgents. The plebeians were at first obdurate, but at last were persuaded to yield to the entreaties of the embassy to return, being won to this mind, so it is said, by one of the wise senators, who made use of the well-known fable of "the Body and the Members."

The following covenant was entered into and bound by the most solemn oaths: the debts of the poor plebeians were to be canceled and debtors held in slavery set free; and two (the number was soon increased to ten) plebeian magistrates called *tribunes*, whose duty it should be to watch over the plebeians and protect them against the injustice and partiality of the patrician magistrates, were to be chosen in an assembly of the plebeians.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxii, 25-29. It was also under this same law, as revised later (it was revised and confirmed 449 B. C. and again 300 B. C.), that Paul accused before Festus, appealed unto Cæsar (Acts xxv, 11).

<sup>2</sup> This assembly, the origin of which is obscure, is known as the Assembly of Tribes (*comitia tributa*).

That the tribunes might be the protectors of the plebeians in something more than name, they were invested with an extraordinary power known as the *jus auxilii*, "the right of aid"; that is, they were given the right, should any patrician magistrate attempt to deal wrongfully with a plebeian, to annul his act or stop his proceeding.<sup>1</sup>

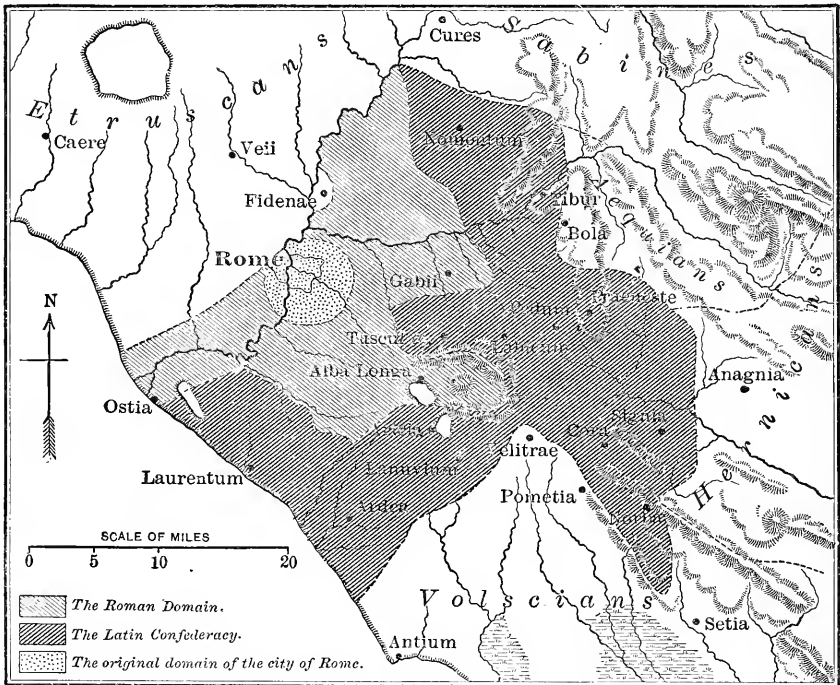
The persons of the tribunes were made inviolable, like the persons of heralds or ambassadors. Any person interrupting a tribune in the discharge of his duties or doing him any violence was declared an outlaw whom any one might kill. That the tribunes might be always easily found, they were not allowed to go more than one mile beyond the city walls. Their houses were to be open night and day, that any plebeian unjustly dealt with might flee thither for protection and refuge.<sup>2</sup>

**32. Border Wars and Border Tales; Cincinnatus.** The chief enemies of early Rome and her Latin allies were the Volscians, the Æquians, the Sabines, and the Etruscans. For more than a hundred years after the founding of the Republic, Rome, either alone or in connection with her confederates, was almost constantly fighting one or another or all of these peoples. But these operations cannot be regarded as real wars. They were, on the side of both parties, for the most part mere plundering forays or cattle-raiding expeditions into the enemy's territories. We shall probably not get a wrong idea of their real character if we liken them to the early so-called border wars between England and Scotland. Like the Scottish wars, they were embellished by the Roman story-tellers with the most extravagant and picturesque tales. One of the best known is the tale of Cincinnatus. The legend tells how, while one of the consuls was away fighting the Sabines, the Æquians defeated the forces of the other and shut them up in a narrow valley whence escape seemed

<sup>1</sup> A tribune, however, had no authority over a consul when the consul was at the head of the army away from Rome, but under all other circumstances he could for disobedience even arrest and imprison him.

<sup>2</sup> Roman writers assign to this period the beginning of the quarrel concerning the disposal of the public lands. This land question was the eternal question at Rome. We shall examine this subject in connection with the great reformers Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus. See sects. 86-88.

impossible. There was great terror in Rome when news of the situation of the army was brought to the city. The Senate immediately appointed Cincinnatus, a grand old patrician, dictator. The commissioners who carried to him the message from the Senate found him upon his little farm across the Tiber, at work ploughing. Cincinnatus at once accepted the office, gathered the Roman army, surrounded and captured the enemy, and sent them all beneath the



THE ROMAN DOMAIN AND THE LATIN CONFEDERACY IN THE TIME OF THE EARLY REPUBLIC, ABOUT 450 B.C.

yoke.<sup>1</sup> He then led his army back to Rome in triumph, laid down his office, having held it only sixteen days, and sought again the retirement of his farm.

**33. The Decemvirs and the Twelve Tables of Laws** (traditional date 451–450 B.C.). While these petty border wars were furnishing the material for tales of adventure and heroism, the contest between

<sup>1</sup> This was formed of two spears thrust firmly into the ground and crossed a few feet from the earth by a third spear. Prisoners of war were forced to pass beneath this yoke as a symbol of submission.

the patricians and plebeians was going on unceasingly in the very heart of the community itself. One phase of this struggle constitutes a landmark in the history of Rome. This was the revision and reduction to writing of the customs and laws of the state.

Written laws are always a great safeguard against oppression. Until what shall constitute a crime and what shall be its penalty are clearly written down and well known and understood by all, judges may render unfair decisions or inflict unjust punishment, and yet run little risk—unless they go altogether too far—of being called to account; for no one but themselves knows what either the law or the penalty really is. Hence, in all struggles of the people against the tyranny of a ruling class, the demand for written laws is one of the first measures taken by them for the protection of their persons and property. Thus the commons at Athens, early in their struggle with the nobles, demanded and obtained a code of written laws. The same thing now took place at Rome. The plebeians demanded that the laws be written down and published. The patricians offered a stubborn resistance to their wishes but finally were forced to yield to the popular clamor.

A commission, so tradition says, was sent to the Greek cities of southern Italy and to Athens to study their laws and customs. Upon the return of this embassy, a commission of ten magistrates, who were known as decemvirs, was appointed to frame a code of laws. These officers, while engaged in this work, were also to administer the entire government, and so were invested with the supreme power of the state. The patricians gave up their consuls, and the plebeians their tribunes. At the end of the first year the task of the board was quite far from being concluded, so a new decemvirate was elected to complete the work. The code was soon finished, and the laws were written on twelve tablets of bronze, which were fastened to the Rostra, or orator's platform in the Forum, where they might be seen and read by all.

Only a few fragments of these celebrated laws have been preserved, but the substance of a considerable part of the code is known to us through the indirect quotations from it or allusions to it occurring in the works of later writers and jurists. The following

quotations will give some idea of the characters of this primitive law-system — the starting-point of a great development (see sect. 192).

The provisions regarding the treatment of debtors are noteworthy. The law provided that, after the lapse of a certain number of days of grace, the creditor of a delinquent debtor might put him in the stocks or in chains, sell him to any stranger resident beyond the Tiber, or put him to death. In case there were several creditors the law provided as follows: "After the third market day his [the debtor's] body may be divided. Any one taking more than his just share shall be held guiltless." We are informed by later Roman writers that this savage provision of the law was, as a matter of fact, never carried into effect.

A special provision touching the power of the father over his sons provided that "during their whole life he shall have the right to imprison, scourge, keep to rustic labor in chains, to sell or to slay, even though they may be in the enjoyment of high state offices." The prevalence of popular superstitions is revealed by one of the laws which provides for the punishment of any one who by enchantments should blight the crops of another.

These "Laws of the Twelve Tables" formed the basis of all new legislation, touching private or personal rights, for many centuries, and constituted a part of the education of the Roman youth — every schoolboy being required to learn them by heart.

**34. Misrule and Overthrow of the Decemvirs ; Second Secession of the Plebeians (450 B.C.).** The first decemvirs used the great power lodged in their hands with justice and prudence ; but the second board, under the leadership of one Appius Claudius, instituted, if we may believe tradition, a most infamous and tyrannical rule. No man's life was safe, be he patrician or plebeian. An ex-tribune, daring to denounce the course of the decemvirs, was caused by them to be assassinated.

Another act, even more outrageous than this, filled to the brim the cup of their iniquities. Virginia was the beautiful daughter of a plebeian. Appius Claudius, desiring to gain possession of her, made use of his authority as a judge to pronounce her a slave. The father of the maiden, preferring the death of his daughter to her dishonor,

killed her with his own hand. Then, drawing the weapon from her breast, he hastened to the army, which was away from Rome resisting a united invasion of the Sabines and Æquians, and, exhibiting the bloody knife, told the story of the outrage.<sup>1</sup>

The soldiers rose as a single man and hurried to the city. The excitement resulted in a great body of the Romans, probably chiefly plebeians, seceding from the state and marching away to the Sacred Hill. This procedure, which once before had proved so effectual in securing justice to the oppressed, had a similar issue now. The situation was so critical that the decemvirs were forced to resign. The consulate and the tribunate were restored.

**35. The Valerio-Horatian Laws ; "the Roman Magna Charta" (449 B.C.).** The consuls chosen were Lucius Valerius and Marcus Horatius, who secured the passage of certain laws, known as the Valerio-Horatian Laws. These laws were of such constitutional importance that they have been called "the Magna Charta of Rome." Like the great English charter, their purpose was not so much the creation of new safeguards of liberty as the reaffirming and strengthening of the old securities of the rights and privileges of the humbler citizens of Rome. Among the provisions of the laws the following were the most important :

1. That the resolutions (*plebiscita*) passed by the plebeian Assembly of Tribes should in the future, presumably if they received the sanction of the Senate,<sup>2</sup> have the force of laws and should bind the whole people the same as the resolutions of the *comitia centuriata*.

2. That the law which made sacred and inviolable the person of the tribunes be reaffirmed and its operation extended to certain other plebeian magistrates, and that he who did injury to any plebeian magistrate be accursed and his property dedicated to the service of the gods.

<sup>1</sup> Livy, iii, 44-50. This tale is possibly mythical, but it at least gives a vivid, and doubtless truthful, picture of the times.

<sup>2</sup> Our authority here (Livy, iii, 55) makes no mention whatsoever of conditions. Since, however, at this time the approval of the Senate was necessary to give validity to acts of the people in the Assembly of Centuries it is a reasonable conjecture that the measures of the plebeians in the Assembly of Tribes must have been subjected to the same condition. At a later period both assemblies were emancipated from the control of the Senate. See below, p. 36, n. 2.

3. That the tribunes be permitted to sit as listeners before the door of the Senate house. This was an important concession, on account of what it led to; for very soon the tribunes secured the right, first to sit within the Senate hall itself, and then to put a stop to any proceeding of the Senate by the use of the veto.

We may summarize the effect of these laws by saying that they made the tribunes and the other plebeian magistrates, as well as the plebeian assembly, a recognized part of the constitutional arrangements of the Roman commonwealth. They mark a long step taken towards the equalization of the two orders within the state.

**36. Marriages between Patricians and Plebeians made Legal (445 B.C.).** Up to this time the plebeians had not been allowed to contract legal marriages with the patricians. But only a few years after the passage of the Valerio-Horatian Laws marriages between plebeians and patricians were legalized.

This established social equality between the two orders. The plebeians were now in a more advantageous position for continuing their struggle for additional civil rights and for perfect political equality with the patricians.

**37. Military Tribunes with Consular Power (444 B.C.).** This same tribune Canuleius also brought forward another proposal, which provided that plebeians might be chosen as consuls. This suggestion led to a violent contention between the two orders. The issue of the matter was a compromise.

It was agreed that, in place of the two patrician consuls, the people might elect from either order magistrates that should be known as "military tribunes with consular powers." These officers, whose number varied, differed from consuls more in name than in functions or in authority. In fact, the plebeians had gained the consular office but not the consular name.

The patricians were especially unwilling that any plebeian should bear the title of consul, for the reason that an ex-consul enjoyed certain dignities and honors, such as the right to wear a particular kind of dress and to set up in his house images of his ancestors (*jus imaginum*). These honorary distinctions the higher order wished to retain exclusively for themselves. Owing to the great influence of



the patricians in the elections, it was not until about 400 B.C. that a plebeian was chosen to the new office.

**38. The Censors (443 B.C.).** No sooner had the plebeians secured the right of admission to the military tribunate with consular powers, than the jealous and exclusive patricians began scheming to rob them of the fruit of the victory they had gained. They effected this by taking from the consulate some of its most distinctive duties and powers, and conferring them upon two new patrician officers called *censors*.

The functions of these magistrates, which were gradually extended as time passed, were many and important. They took the census of the citizens and their property, and thus assigned to every man his position in the different classes. They could, for immorality or for any improper conduct, degrade a knight from his rank, expel a member from the Senate, or deprive any citizen of his vote by striking his name from the roll of the tribes. It was their duty to rebuke ostentation and extravagance in living, and in particular to watch over the morals of the young. From the name of these Roman officers comes our word *ensorious*, meaning fault-finding.

**39. Siege and Capture of Veii (405-396 B.C.); the Romanization of Etruria.** We must now turn our attention once more to the fortunes of Rome in war. Almost from the founding of the city we find its warlike citizens carrying on a fierce contest with their powerful Etruscan neighbors on the north. The war finally gathered around Veii, the largest and richest of the cities of Etruria. The place was at length taken, and the immense spoils were carried to Rome.

The siege of Veii forms a sort of landmark in the military history of Rome. The length of the siege and the necessity of maintaining a force permanently in the field, winter and summer alike, led to the introduction of pay into the army; for hitherto the common soldier had not only equipped himself but had served without pay. From this time forward the professional soldier came more and more to take the place of the citizen soldier.

The capture of Veii was followed by that of many other Etruscan towns, and all the southern portion of Etruria, divided into four tribes or wards, was added to the Roman domain, doubling it in

extent. Into this rich and inviting region thus opened up to Roman enterprise, Roman immigrants crowded in great numbers, and soon all this part of Etruria became Roman in manners, in customs, and in speech. The Romanization of Italy was now fairly begun.

A generation or so after the absorption by Rome of southern Etruria, an unsuccessful war against the Romans by the Etruscan cities that still retained their independence marks the decisive turning point in the fortunes of the Etruscan race. We shall find them in arms against Rome again and again after this, but their attacks were no longer formidable. What elements of vitality and strength still remained in the race were gradually absorbed by Rome, and the Etruscan people and the Etruscan civilization, as distinct factors in history, disappeared from the world.

**40. Sack of Rome by the Gauls (traditional date 390 B.C.).** Only a few years after the fall of Veii, there broke upon Rome a storm from the north which all but cut short the story we are narrating. We have noticed how, in early times, Celtic tribes from Gaul crossed the Alps and established themselves in northern Italy (sect. 1). While the Romans were conquering the towns of Etruria these barbarian hordes were moving southward and overrunning and devastating the countries of central Italy.

They soon appeared in the neighborhood of Rome. A Roman army met them on or near the river Allia, a few miles from the capital. But an unaccountable panic seized the Romans and they abandoned the field in disgraceful flight. The greater part of the fugitives sought safety behind the walls of Veii, which were still standing.

Consternation filled the capital when news of the terrible disaster reached the city. The vestal virgins, hastily burying such of the sacred things of the temple of Vesta as they could not carry away, fled into Etruria, and found a kind reception at the hands of the people of Cære. A large part of the population of Rome followed them across the river and threw themselves into such places of safety as they could find. No attempt was made to defend any portion of the city except the citadel. A tradition tells how, when the barbarians, under cover of the darkness of night, had climbed the steep rock and had almost effected an entrance to the citadel, the defenders

were awakened by the cackling of some geese, which the piety of the famishing soldiers had spared because these birds were sacred to Juno.

News was now brought the Gauls that the Venetians were overrunning their possessions in northern Italy. This led them to open negotiations with the Romans. For one thousand pounds of gold the Gauls agreed to retire from the city. As the story runs, while the gold was being weighed out in the Forum the Romans complained that the weights were false, whereupon Brennus, the Gallic leader, threw his sword also into the scales, exclaiming, "*Væ victis!*" "Woe to the vanquished!" Just at this moment, so the patriotic tale continues, Camillus, a brave patrician general who had been appointed dictator, appeared upon the scene with a Roman army that had been gathered from the fugitives. As with heavy blows he scattered the barbarians, he exclaimed, "Rome is ransomed with steel, and not with gold." According to one account Brennus himself was taken prisoner; but another tradition says that he escaped, carrying with him the ransom money.

The city was quickly rebuilt. There were some things, however, which could not be restored. These were the ancient records and documents, through whose irreparable loss the early history of Rome is involved in great obscurity and uncertainty.

**41. The Licinian Laws; the Consulate Opened to Plebeians.** Soon after these events a great advance of the plebeians towards equality with the patricians was effected through the passage of the Licinian Laws, so called from one of their proposers, the tribune Gaius Licinius. The only provisions of these laws which we need to notice here were the following: (1) that the office of military tribune with consular power (sect. 37) should be abolished, that two consuls should be chosen yearly as at first, and that one of these should be a plebeian; (2) that in place of the two patrician keepers of the Sibylline Books (sect. 19) there should in the future be ten keepers, and that five of these should be plebeians.

For ten years the patricians withstood the demands of the commons; but finally, when they saw that it would be impossible longer to resist the popular demand, they had recourse to the old device. They lessened the powers of the consulship by taking away from the consuls

an important part of their judicial functions and devolving them upon a new patrician magistrate bearing the name of *prætor*. The pretext for this was that the plebeians had no knowledge of the sacred formulas of the law. The Senate then approved the proposals and they became laws (367 B.C.). The son of a peasant might now rise to the highest office in the state. The plebeians later gained with comparative ease admission to the remaining offices from which the jealousy of the patricians still excluded them.<sup>1</sup>

As a symbol and memorial of the virtual end of the long contention between the two orders of the state,<sup>2</sup> the year following the passage of the Licinian Laws there was erected near the Comitium a temple dedicated to the goddess Concord. The reconciliation of the orders insured the future of Rome. It was followed by a century of successful wars which made the city the mistress of Italy and paved the way for her advance to the dominion of the civilized world.

**Selections from the Sources.** PLUTARCH, *Poplicola* and *Gaius Marcius Coriolanus*. LIVY, ii, 33, 34, 39, 40 (for the story of Coriolanus); v, 35-49 (on the taking of Rome by the Gauls). Munro's *Source Book*, pp. 47-64, 71-77; Davis's *Readings* (Rome), pp. 15-33, 42-48.

**References (Modern).** MOMMSEN, vol. i, bk. ii, chaps. i-iii. DURUY, vol. i, chaps. vi-xiii. PELHAM, *Outlines of Roman History*, bk. ii, chap. i. HOW and LEIGH, *History of Rome*, chaps. v-xiii. SHUCKBURGH, *History of Rome*, chaps. v, viii, ix. ABBOTT, *Roman Political Institutions*, pp. 24-57. IHNE, *Early Rome*, chaps. x-xxi. FRANK, *Roman Imperialism*, chaps. i, ii. GREENIDGE, *Roman Public Life*, chap. ii. GRANRUD, *Roman Constitutional History*, pp. 27-92.

**Topics for Class Reports.** 1. Legend of the Fabii: Livy, ii, 48, 49. 2. Virtues prized by the early Romans as shown by the stories of their heroes (Mucius Scævola, Cincinnatus, Lucius Junius Brutus, Marcus Curtius, etc.): find these tales by use of the indexes of available histories.

<sup>1</sup> They secured admission to the dictatorship in 356 B.C.; to the censorship in 351 B.C.; to the prætorship in 337 B.C.

<sup>2</sup> Though with the opening of the consulate to the plebeians the issue of the struggle between the orders was virtually decided, there was something lacking to render complete the triumph of the plebeians. The assembly of the plebs was still subject to the control of the aristocratic Senate (see p. 31, n. 2). By the famous Hortensian Law, 287 B.C., it was emancipated from this control, and became, like the Assembly of Centuries (which had been freed from the power of the Senate by the so-called Publilian Law, 339 B.C.), an independent sovereign legislature whose acts bound the whole people. This emancipation measure may be compared to that which in 1911 freed the English House of Commons from the virtual control of the House of Lords.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CONQUEST AND UNIFICATION OF ITALY

(367-264 B.C.)

**42. Rome Creates a New Grade of Citizens; the Case of Cære (353 B.C.).** It will be fitting if we begin the present chapter, in which we shall have much to say concerning the matter of Roman citizenship, with an account of the creation by the city of a new grade of citizens.<sup>1</sup>

We have seen how, after the taking of Veii, the Romans incorporated with the territory of their state a great part of southern Etruria (sect. 39). The Romanization of these lands, and the threatening advance of the Roman power in these regions, caused an uprising of several of the Etruscan cities, among them Cære. The movement was quickly suppressed and the leaders punished. But the people of Cære, because this city at the time Rome was destroyed by the Gauls had given an asylum to the vestal virgins and the sacred things of the Roman gods (sect. 40), were dealt with leniently. Their political independence was, indeed, taken away from them, and their territory incorporated with the Roman state, but they were left in control of their own local affairs, and were given all the private rights of Roman citizens, but not the right to hold office or to vote in the assemblies at Rome.<sup>2</sup>

**43. The Beginning of the Roman Municipal System.** Now the Roman statesmen in determining the relations of Cære to Rome had done something more than to create a new class or grade of Roman citizens. They had, consciously or unconsciously, created a new system of government. For Rome had never before, so far as we know

<sup>1</sup> The student should here reread sect. 13.

<sup>2</sup> The class of rights conferred upon the citizens of Cære were known as "Cæritan rights."

positively,<sup>1</sup> dealt with a conquered city in just the way that she dealt with Cære. When Alba Longa (a leading city of Latium) was taken, in the times of the kings, the city, according to the tradition, was destroyed, and its inhabitants transported in a body to Rome and incorporated with the Roman people. When Veii was taken, in the year 396 B.C. (sect. 39), the greater part of the inhabitants were killed or sold as slaves, and the vanquished community was thus wholly broken up and, as it were, wiped out of existence.

Now Rome admittedly could not attain to greatness by following either of these two policies. But in dealing with Cære, she happily hit upon a new governmental device which enabled her to incorporate into her growing dominions one conquered city after another until she had absorbed the whole Mediterranean world. This device was what is known as the municipal system, for the reason that the Roman writers gave to a city having a status like that of Cære the name *municipium*.

We shall best secure a good understanding of the essential feature of this municipal system, if we glance at the system as it exists among ourselves to-day; for our so-called municipal system, in its underlying principle, is an inheritance from Rome. A municipality or municipal town in our system of government is a city which, acting under a charter granted by the state in whose territory it is situated and of which it forms a part, elects its own magistrates, and manages, with more or less supervision on the part of the state, its own local affairs. The essential principle involved in the arrangement is local self-government, carried on under the superior authority of the state. The city, without its local political life having been stifled, has been made a vital part of a larger political organism.

How this form of government fostered among the Italians, at one and the same time, local patriotism and national patriotism, love for one's native city and interest and pride in the affairs of the greater commonwealth of which that city was only a part, is well illustrated by these memorable words once used by Cicero: "Every burgher of a

<sup>1</sup> Some authorities maintain that Gabii, with which city Rome had treaty relations just at the opening of history, others that Tusculum, which was subjected in some way to Rome in 381 B.C., was the most ancient of Roman *municipia*. The question of precedence here raised has, however, only an antiquarian interest.

corporate town," he says, "has, I take it, two fatherlands, that of which he is a native, and that of which he is a citizen. I will never deny allegiance to my native town, only I will never forget that Rome is my greater Fatherland, and that Arpinum<sup>1</sup> is but a portion of Rome."<sup>2</sup>

What we have now said will convey some idea of the important place which the municipal system of Rome holds in the development of free self-government among men. This was Rome's great, and almost her only, contribution to political constitutional history, and after her law system (sect. 190) her best gift to civilization.

**44. The Revolt of the Latin Cities (340-338 B.C.).** This governmental device of the *municipium* was first applied by Rome, in a large way, to the neighboring cities of Latium. We have seen how at the opening of the historic period the little city-states of this region formed a federation known as the Latin League, of which Rome was the leading member (sect. 5). At the outset this association seems to have been somewhat like the Delian League, which after the repulse of the Persians from Greece Athens formed with her Ionian allies. But as time passed Rome began to play in the league the same rôle that Athens played in the Delian Confederacy. She used her position in the at first equal alliance between her and the Latin towns to make herself virtually their master. From allies they became dependents. With this position they could not be satisfied. They resolved that Rome should give up the sovereignty she was virtually exercising. Accordingly they sent an embassy to Rome, demanding that the association should be made one of perfect equality. To this end the ambassadors proposed that in the future one of the consuls should be a Latin, and that one half of the Senate should be chosen from the Latin nation. Rome was to be the common fatherland, and all were to bear the Roman name.

These demands of the ambassadors were listened to by the Roman senators with amazement and indignation. "O Jupiter!" exclaimed Titus Manlius, one of the consuls, addressing the statue of the god, "canst thou endure to behold in thy own sacred temple strangers as consuls and as senators?"<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cicero's birthplace.

<sup>2</sup> *De Legibus*, ii, 2, 5; as quoted by Strachan-Davidson, *Cicero*, p. 6.    <sup>3</sup> Livy, viii, 5.

The demands of the Latin allies were refused, and war followed. After about three years hard fighting, the rebellion was subdued. Rome now dissolved the Latin League and resettled her relations to its members. The essence of this famous settlement was that most of the cities—a few, three or four, were left their independence—were made *municipia* of different grades; that is to say, they were deprived of sovereignty and their territories were made a part of the Roman domain, but they were left their city constitutions and were allowed to live on as separate communities with local self-government inside the Roman state. The inhabitants of some of these municipalities were admitted at once to full Roman citizenship, while those of others were allowed only a part of the rights and privileges of citizens. After a period of probation these semicitizens<sup>1</sup> were all admitted to the full rights of the city.

Rome was now fairly started on the way to greatness. She had laid the foundations of a state unlike anything the world had seen before, and one capable of great expansion. "It was, in short, to the liberal policy inaugurated by the statesman of 338 that the Roman city-state owed its capacity to unify Italy and make it one people."<sup>2</sup>

**45. The Samnites.** The most formidable competitors of the Romans for supremacy in Italy were the Samnites, rough and warlike mountaineers who held the Apennines to the southeast of Latium. The successive struggles between these martial races—the ancient writers tell of three wars—extended over a period of half a century (about 343–290 B.C.), and in their course involved almost all the states of Italy. The Romans were final victors. The Samnites were forced to acknowledge the supremacy of Rome, and the states and tribes that had formed alliance with them were chastised. Within a short time after the subjection of the Samnites almost all the Greek cities of southern Italy, except Tarentum, had also come under the growing power of the imperial city.

During the course of these wars with the Samnites and their allies Rome had added extensive territories to her domain, and had made

<sup>1</sup> Known as *cives sine suffragio* (citizens without suffrage), since they could not vote in the assemblies at Rome.

<sup>2</sup> Frank, *Roman Imperialism* (1914), p. 40.



her hold of these secure by means of colonies and military roads; for it was at this time that Rome began the construction of those remarkable highways that formed one of the most impressive features of her later empire. The first of these roads, which ran from Rome to Capua, was begun in the year 312 B.C. by the censor Appius Claudius, and was called after him the *Via Appia*.

**46. The War with Tarentum and Pyrrhus (282-272 B.C.).** Tarentum, a seaport of Calabria, was one of the most opulent of the cities

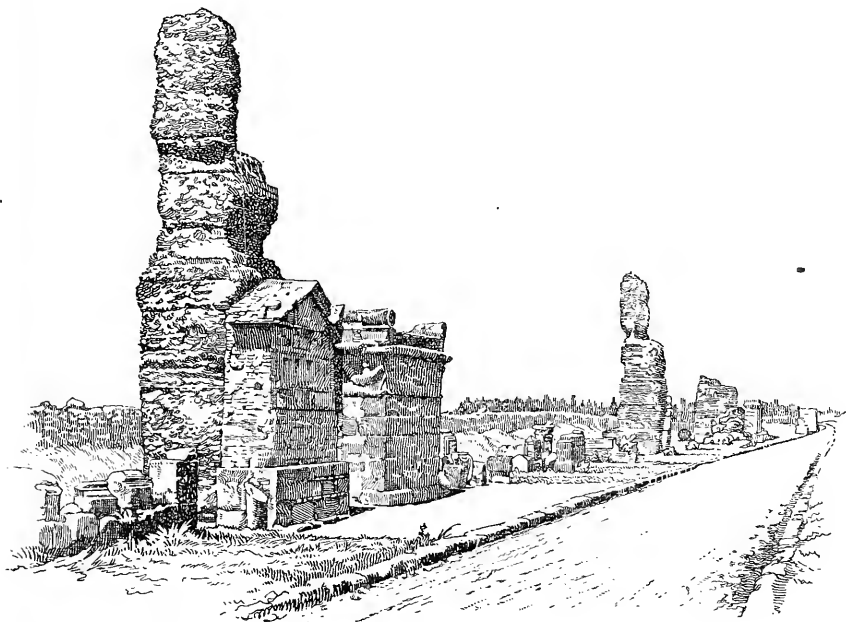


FIG. 8. THE APPIAN WAY. (From a photograph)

of Magna Græcia. Its inhabitants were luxurious in their habits, idle, and frivolous, entering into and breaking engagements with careless levity. They spent the most of their time in feasting and drinking, in lounging in the baths, in attending the theater, and in idle talk on the streets.

The Tarentines having mistreated some Roman prisoners, the Roman Senate promptly sent an embassy to Tarentum to demand amends. In the theater, in the presence of a great assembly, one of the ambassadors was grossly insulted, his toga being befouled by a clownish fellow, amidst the approving plaudits of a giddy crowd.

The ambassador, raising the soiled garment, said sternly, "Laugh now; but you will weep when this toga is cleansed with blood." Rome at once declared war.

The Tarentines turned to Greece for aid. Pyrrhus, king of Epirus and a cousin of Alexander the Great, a restless man, who, as Plutarch says, "thought life consisted in troubling others and in being troubled," and who had an ambition to build up such an empire in the West as his famous kinsman had established in the East, responded to their entreaties, and crossed over into Italy with an army of Greek mercenaries and twenty war elephants. He organized and drilled the effeminate Tarentines, and soon felt ready to face the Romans.

The hostile armies met at Heraclea (280 B.C.). The battle was won for Pyrrhus by his war elephants, the sight of which, being new to the Romans, caused them to flee from the field in dismay. But Pyrrhus had lost thousands of his bravest troops. As he looked over the battlefield he is said to have turned to his companions and remarked, "Another such victory and I shall be ruined"; hence the phrase, "A Pyrrhic victory."

The prudence of the victorious Pyrrhus led him to send to the Romans proposals of peace. When the Senate hesitated, its resolution was fixed by the eloquence of the now old and blind Appius Claudius; "Rome," he exclaimed, "shall never treat with a victorious foe." The ambassadors were sent back to Pyrrhus with the reply that if he wanted peace he must first quit the soil of Italy.

After a second victory as disastrous as his first, Pyrrhus crossed over into Sicily to aid the Greeks there, who were being hard pressed by the Carthaginians. At first he was everywhere successful, but finally fortune turned against him, and he was glad to escape from the island. Recrossing the straits into Italy, he once more engaged the Romans; but at Beneventum he suffered a disastrous defeat (275 B.C.). Leaving a sufficient force to garrison Tarentum, Pyrrhus now set sail for Epirus, "leaving behind him nothing save a brilliant reputation." He had scarcely embarked before Tarentum surrendered to the Romans (272 B.C.). This virtually ended the struggle for the mastery of Italy. Rome was soon mistress of all the peninsula south of the streams of the Arnus (Arno) and the Rubicon.

**47. United Italy.** We cannot make out clearly just what rights and powers Rome exercised over the various cities, tribes, and nations which she had brought under her rule.<sup>1</sup> This much, however, is clear. She took away from them the right of making war, and thus put a stop to the bloody contentions which from time immemorial had raged between the tribes and cities of the peninsula. She thus gave Italy what, after she had laid her restraining authority upon all the peoples of the Mediterranean lands, came to be called the *Pax Romana* (the Roman Peace).

This political union of Italy paved the way for the social and racial unification of the peninsula. The greatest marvel of all history is how Rome, embracing at first merely a handful of peasants, could have made so much of the ancient world like unto herself in blood, in speech, in custom, and in manners. That she did so, that she did thus Romanize a large part of the peoples of antiquity, is one of the most important matters in the history of the human race. Rome accomplished this great feat in large measure by means of her system of colonization, which was, in some respects, unlike that of any other people in ancient or in modern times. We must make ourselves familiar with some of the main features of this unique colonial system.

**48. Roman Colonies and Latin Colonies.** The colonies that Rome established in conquered territories fall into two classes, known as Roman colonies and Latin colonies. Roman colonies were made up of emigrants, generally three hundred in number, who retained in the new settlement all the rights and privileges, both private and public, of Roman citizens, though of course some of these rights, as for instance that of voting in the public assemblies at Rome, could be exercised by the colonist only through his return to the capital. Such colonies were in effect permanent military camps intended to guard or to hold in subjection conquered territories. Usually it was some conquered city that was occupied by the Roman colonists, the old inhabitants either being expelled in whole or in part or reduced to a

<sup>1</sup> We refer here, not to those territories and communities (*municipia*) that Rome had actually incorporated with the Roman domain, which now embraced about one third of the peninsula, but to those communities to which was given the name of *Italian allies*.

subject condition. The colonists in their new homes organized a government which was almost an exact imitation of that of Rome, and through their own assemblies and their own magistrates managed all their local affairs. These colonies were, in a word, simply suburbs of the mother city. They were in effect just so many miniature Romes — centers from which radiated Roman culture into all the regions round about them.

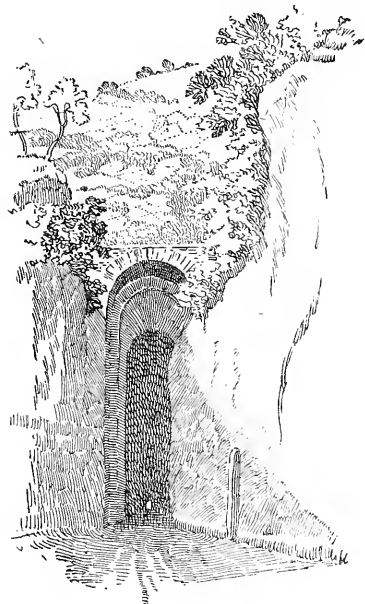


FIG. 9. GROTTA OF POSILIPO  
(Near Naples)

An old Roman tunnel, about half a mile in length, still in use on the Appian Way

The Latin colonies were so called, not because they were founded by Latin settlers,<sup>1</sup> but because their inhabitants possessed substantially the same rights as the towns of the old Latin League. The Latin colonist possessed some of the most valuable of the private rights of Roman citizens, together with the capacity to acquire the suffrage by migrating to the capital and taking up a permanent residence there, provided he left behind in the town whence he came sons to take his place.

There is an analogy between the status of a settler in an ancient Latin colony and of a settler in a Territory of our Union. When a citizen of any State migrates to a Territory he loses

his right of voting in a federal election, just as a Roman citizen in becoming a Latin colonist lost his right of voting in the assemblies at Rome. Then again, the resident of a Territory has the privilege of changing his residence and settling in a State, thereby acquiring the federal suffrage, just as the inhabitant of a Latin colony could migrate to Rome, and thus acquire the right to vote in the public assemblies there.

<sup>1</sup> Both Romans and Latins participated in the establishment of these earlier Latin colonies, the Roman settlers giving up their Roman citizenship and assuming the Latin status.

The Latin colonies numbered about thirty at the time of the Second Punic War. They were scattered everywhere throughout Italy, and formed, in the words of the historian Mommsen, "the real buttress of the Roman rule." They were, even to a much greater degree than the Roman colonies, active and powerful agents in the dissemination of the Roman language, law, and culture. They were Rome's chief auxiliary in her great task of making all Italy Roman.

All these colonies were kept in close touch with the capital by means of splendid military roads, the construction of which, as we have seen, was begun during the Samnite wars (sect. 45).

**Selections from the Sources.** PLUTARCH, *Life of Pyrrhus*. LIVY, ix, 2-11 (the Roman defeat at Caudine Forks); x, 28, 29 (the self-sacrifice of Decius Mus). Munro's *Source Book*, pp. 74-77; Davis's *Readings* (Rome), pp. 33-41.

**References (Modern).** MOMMSEN, vol. i, bk. ii, chaps. v-ix. IHNE, vol. i, bk. iii, chap. xviii, "Condition of the Roman People before the Beginning of the Wars with Carthage." HEITLAND, vol. i, chaps. xvi-xx. DURUY, vol. i, chaps. xiv-xvii. TIGHE, *The Development of the Roman Constitution*, chap. v. FREEMAN, *The Story of Sicily*, chap. xiii, "Pyrrhus in Italy." PELHAM, *Outlines of Roman History*, bk. ii, chap. ii. SHUCKBURGH, *History of Rome*, chaps. x-xv. HOW and LEIGH, *History of Rome*, chaps. xiii-xvi. REID, *The Municipalities of the Roman Empire*, chaps. i-iii, iv (first part).

**Topics for Class Reports.** 1. Was the action of the Roman Senate in the affair of the Caudine Forks honorable? Livy, ix, 2-11; How and Leigh, *History of Rome*, pp. 108-110. 2. Tales of the Pyrrhic War: Plutarch, *Pyrrhus*. 3. The system employed by the Roman engineers in tunneling mountains: Lanciani, *Ancient Rome in the Light of Recent Discoveries*, pp. 61-62.

## CHAPTER V

### EXPANSION OF ROME BEYOND THE PENINSULA

#### I. THE FIRST PUNIC WAR (264-241 B.C.)

**49. Carthage and her Empire.** Foremost among the cities founded by the Phœnicians upon the different shores of the Mediterranean was Carthage, upon the northern coast of Africa. The favorable location of the colony upon one of the best harbors of the African coast gave the city a vast and lucrative commerce. At the period which we have now reached it had grown into an imperial city, covering, with its gardens and suburbs, a district twenty-three miles in circuit. It is said to have contained seven hundred thousand inhabitants.

By the time Rome had extended her authority over Italy, Carthage held sway, through peaceful colonization or by force of arms, over the northern coast of Africa, and possessed Sardinia as well as the larger part of Sicily. She also collected tribute from the natives of Corsica and of southern Spain. With all its shores dotted with her colonies and fortresses and swept in every direction by her war galleys, the western Mediterranean had become a "Phœnician lake," in which, as the Carthaginians boasted, no one dared wash his hands without their permission.

The government of Carthage was democratic in theory but oligarchic in fact. Corresponding to the Roman consuls, two magistrates, called suffetes, stood at the head of the state. The senate was composed of the heads of the leading families; its duties and powers were very like those of the Roman Senate.

**50. Rome and Carthage Compared.** These two great republics, which for more than five centuries had been slowly extending their limits and maturing their powers upon the opposite shores of the

Mediterranean, were now about to begin one of the most memorable struggles of all antiquity—a duel that was to last, with every vicissitude of fortune, for over one hundred years.

In material power and resources the two rival cities seemed well matched as antagonists; yet Rome had elements of strength, hidden in the character of her citizens and embodied in the principles of her government, which Carthage did not possess.

First, the Carthaginian territories, though of great extent, were widely scattered, while the Roman domains were compact and confined to a single and easily defended peninsula.

Again, the subject peoples of Carthage's empire were in race, language, and religion mostly alien to their Phœnician conquerors, and so were ready, upon the first disaster to the ruling city, to fall away from their allegiance. On the other hand, the Latin allies and the Italian confederates of Rome were close kin to her, and so through natural impulse they for the most part—although not all were satisfied with their position in the state—remained loyal to her during even the darkest periods of her struggle with her rival.

But the greatest contrast between the two states appeared in the principles upon which they were respectively based. Carthage was a despotic oligarchy. The many different races of the Carthaginian empire were held in an artificial union by force alone, for the Carthaginians had none of the genius of the Romans for political organization and state building. The Roman state, on the other hand, as we have learned, was the most wonderful political organism that the world had ever seen. It was not yet a nation, but it was rapidly growing into one. Every free man within its limits was either a citizen of Rome or was on the way to becoming a citizen. Rome was already the common fatherland of more than a quarter of a million of men. The Roman armies were, in large part, armies of citizen soldiers, like those Athenian warriors that fought at Marathon and at Salamis; the armies of Carthage were mainly armies of mercenaries like those that Xerxes led against the Greek cities. And then the Romans, in their long contests with the different races of Italy for the mastery of the peninsula, had secured such a training in war as perhaps no other people before them ever had.

As to the naval resources of the two states there existed at the beginning of the war no basis for a comparison. The Romans were destitute of anything that could be called a war navy,<sup>1</sup> and were almost without experience in naval warfare; while the Carthaginians possessed the largest and the most splendidly equipped fleet that had ever patrolled the waters of the Mediterranean.



FIG. 10. PROW OF A ROMAN WARSHIP. (From an ancient relief)

The representation shows the arrangement of the tiers of oars in a two-banked ship. In just what way the lines of rowers in triremes and quinqueremes were arranged is unknown

And in another respect Carthage had an immense advantage over Rome. She had Hannibal. Rome had some great commanders, but she had none like him.

**51. The Beginning of the War.** Lying between Italy and the coast of Africa is the large island of Sicily. At the commencement of the First Punic War, the Carthaginians held possession of all the island save a strip of the eastern coast, which was under the sway of the Greek city of Syracuse. The Greeks and the Carthaginians had

<sup>1</sup> Polybius (i, 20) says that they did not have a single galley when they first crossed over to Sicily. He says they ferried their army across in boats borrowed from the Greek cities of southern Italy.



carried on an almost uninterrupted struggle through two centuries for the control of the island, but the Romans had not yet set foot upon it. In the year 264 B.C., however, on a flimsy pretext of giving protection to some friends, the Romans crossed over to the island. That act committed them to a career of conquest destined to continue till their armies had made the circuit of the Mediterranean lands.

The Syracusans and the Carthaginians, old enemies and rivals though they had been, joined their forces against the newcomers. The allies were defeated in the first battle, and the Roman army obtained a sure foothold in the island. Hiero, king of Syracuse, seeing that he was upon the losing side, forsook the Carthaginians, formed an alliance with the Romans, and ever after remained their firm friend.

**52. The Romans Gain their First Naval Victory (260 B.C.).** Their experience during the past campaigns had shown the Romans that if they were to cope successfully with the Carthaginians, they must be able to meet them upon the sea as well as upon the land, so they determined to build a fleet. A Carthaginian galley, tradition says, that had been wrecked upon the shores of Italy served as a pattern.<sup>1</sup> It is affirmed that within the short space of sixty days a growing forest was converted into a fleet of one hundred and twenty war galleys.

The consul C. Duilius was intrusted with the command of the fleet. He met the Carthaginian squadron near the city and promontory of Mylæ, on the northern coast of Sicily. Now, distrusting their ability to match the skill of their enemy in naval tactics, the Romans had

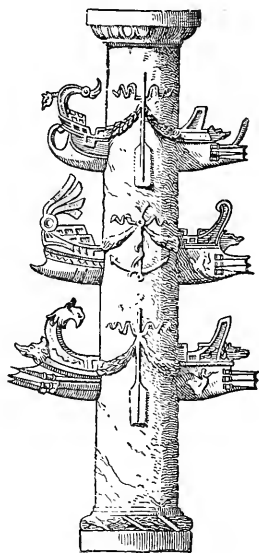


FIG. II. THE TRIUMPHAL COLUMN OF DUILIUS. (A restoration)

The column was decorated with the prows of ships captured at Mylæ

<sup>1</sup> The Greek and Etruscan ships were merely triremes, that is, galleys with three banks of oars; while the Carthaginian ships were quinqueremes, or vessels with five rows of oars. The former were unable to cope with the latter, such an advantage did these have in their greater weight and height.

provided each of their vessels with a drawbridge. As soon as a Carthaginian ship came near enough to a Roman vessel, this gangway was allowed to fall upon the approaching galley; and the Roman soldiers, rushing along the bridge, were soon engaged in a hand-to-hand conflict with their enemies, in which species of encounter the former were unequaled. The result was a complete victory for the Romans. It inspired in the more sanguine splendid visions of maritime command and glory. The Mediterranean should speedily become a Roman lake in which no vessel might float without the consent of Rome.

**53. Regulus and the Carthaginian Embassy.** The Romans now resolved to carry the war into Africa. At first they were successful in all their operations there. Finally, however, Regulus, one of the consuls who led the army of invasion, suffered a severe defeat and was made prisoner. A fleet which was sent to bear away the remnants of the shattered army was wrecked in a terrific storm off the coast of Sicily. A second expedition to Africa ended in like disaster to the Romans, with the loss of another great fleet. For a few years the Romans refrained from tempting again the hostile powers of the sea, and Sicily became once more the battle-ground of the contending rivals. At last, having lost a great battle (battle of Panormus, 251 B.C.), the Carthaginians became dispirited, and sent an embassy to Rome to negotiate for peace. Among the commissioners was Regulus, who, since his capture five years before, had been held a prisoner in Africa. Before leaving Carthage he had promised to return if the embassy were unsuccessful. For the sake of his own release, the Carthaginians supposed he would counsel peace, or at least urge an exchange of prisoners. But it is related that, upon arrival at Rome, he counseled war instead of peace, at the same time revealing to the Senate the enfeebled condition of Carthage. As to the exchange of prisoners, he said, "Let those who have surrendered when they ought to have died, die in the land which has witnessed their disgrace."

The Roman Senate, following his counsel, rejected all the proposals of the embassy; and Regulus, in spite of the tears and entreaties of his wife and friends, turned away from Rome, and set

out for Carthage, to meet whatever fate the Carthaginians, in their disappointment and anger, might plan for him. The tradition affirms that he was put to a cruel death.

**54. Loss of Two More Roman Fleets.** After the failure of the Carthaginian embassy the war went on for several years by land and by sea with many vicissitudes. At last, on the coast of Sicily, one of the consuls, Claudius, met with an overwhelming defeat. Almost a hundred vessels of his fleet were lost. The disaster caused the greatest alarm at Rome. Superstition increased the fears of the people. It was reported that just before the battle, when the auspices were being taken and the sacred chickens would not eat, Claudius had given orders to have them thrown into the sea, irreverently remarking, "At any rate, they shall drink." Imagination was free to depict what further evils the offended gods might inflict upon the Roman state.

The gloomiest forebodings might have found justification

in subsequent events. The other consul just now met with a great disaster. He was proceeding along the southern coast of Sicily with a fleet of over nine hundred war galleys and transports, when a severe storm arising, the squadron was beaten to pieces upon the rocks. Not a single ship escaped.

**55. Close of the First Punic War (241 B.C.).** The war had now lasted for fifteen years. Four Roman fleets had been destroyed, three of which had been sunk or broken to pieces by storms. It was several years before the Romans regained sufficient courage again to commit their fortune to the element that had been so unfriendly to them.

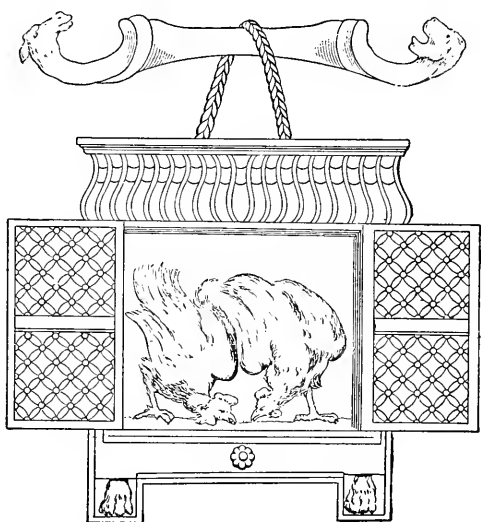


FIG. 12. AUGUR'S BIRDS. (After a drawing based on an ancient relief)

The knowledge sought was gained by observing the birds' manner of taking their food. Their refusal to eat was an unlucky omen

A fleet of two hundred vessels was then built and equipped, entirely by private subscription, and intrusted to the command of the consul Catulus. He met the Carthaginian fleet near the Ægatian Islands, and inflicted upon it a decisive defeat (241 B.C.).

The Carthaginians now sued for peace. A treaty was at length arranged, the terms of which required that Carthage should give up all claims to the island of Sicily, surrender all her prisoners, and pay an indemnity of thirty-two hundred talents (about four million dollars), one third of which was to be paid down, and the balance in ten yearly payments. Thus ended, after a continuance of twenty-four years, the first great struggle between Carthage and Rome.

One important result of the war was the crippling of the sea power of the Phœnician race, which from time immemorial had been a most prominent factor in the history of the Mediterranean lands, and the giving virtually of the control of the sea into the hands of the Romans.

## II. ROME AND CARTHAGE BETWEEN THE FIRST AND THE SECOND PUNIC WAR (241-218 B.C.)

**56. The First Roman Province and the Beginning of the Provincial System (241 B.C.).** For the twenty-three years following the close of the first struggle between Rome and Carthage the two rivals strained every power and taxed every resource in preparation for a renewal of the contest.

The Romans settled the affairs of Sicily, organizing all of it, save the lands in the eastern part belonging to Syracuse, as a province of the Republic.<sup>1</sup> This was the first Roman province, but as the imperial city extended her conquests, her provincial possessions increased in number and size until they formed at last a perfect cordon about the Mediterranean. Each province was governed by a magistrate sent out from the capital. This officer exercised both civil and military authority, with power of life and death over the natives. Each province also paid an annual tribute in kind, or a money tax, to Rome, something that had never been exacted of the Italian allies.

<sup>1</sup> The government established in 241 B.C. was temporary; it was made regular and permanent in 227 B.C.

This Roman provincial system presented a sharp contrast to that liberal system of federation and incorporation that formed the very corner stone of the Roman power in Italy. There Rome had made all, or substantially all, of the conquered peoples either citizens or close confederates. Against the provincials she not only closed the gates of the city but denied to the most of them all but the mere *name* of allies. She made them virtually her subjects, and administered their affairs not in their interest but in her own. This illiberal policy contributed largely, as we shall learn, to the undoing of the Roman Republic.

**57. Rome Acquires Sardinia and Corsica (227 B.C.).** The first acquisition by the Romans of tribute-paying lands beyond the peninsula seems to have created in them an insatiable ambition for foreign conquests. They soon found a pretext for seizing the island of Sardinia, the most ancient, and, after Sicily, the most prized of the possessions of the Carthaginians. This island in connection with Corsica, which was also seized, was formed into a Roman province (227 B.C.). With her hands upon these islands, the authority of Rome in the Western or Tuscan Sea was supreme.<sup>1</sup>

**58. War with the Gauls; Roman Authority Extended to the Alps.** In the north, during this same period, Roman authority was extended from the Apennines and the Rubicon to the foot of the Alps. Alarmed at the advance of the Romans, who were pushing northward their great military road called the Flaminian Way, Gallic tribes on both sides the Alps gathered for an assault upon Rome. Intelligence of this movement among the northern tribes threw all Italy into a fever of excitement. At Rome the terror was great; for not yet had died out of memory what the city had once suffered at the hands of the ancestors of these same barbarians (sect. 40). An ancient prediction, found in the Sibylline Books, declared that a

<sup>1</sup> In a more legitimate way the Romans extended their influence over the seas that wash the eastern shores of Italy. For a long time the Adriatic and Ionian waters had been infested with Illyrian pirates. These buccaneers troubled not only the towns along the shores of Greece but were even so bold as to make descents upon the Italian coasts. The Roman fleet chased these corsairs from the Adriatic, and captured several of their strongholds. Rome now assumed a sort of protectorate over the Greek cities of the Adriatic coast. This was her first step in the path that was to lead her to absolute supremacy in Greece and throughout all the East.

portion of Roman territory must needs be occupied by Gauls. Hoping sufficiently to fulfill the prophecy and satisfy fate, the Roman Senate caused two Gauls to be buried alive in one of the public squares of the capital.

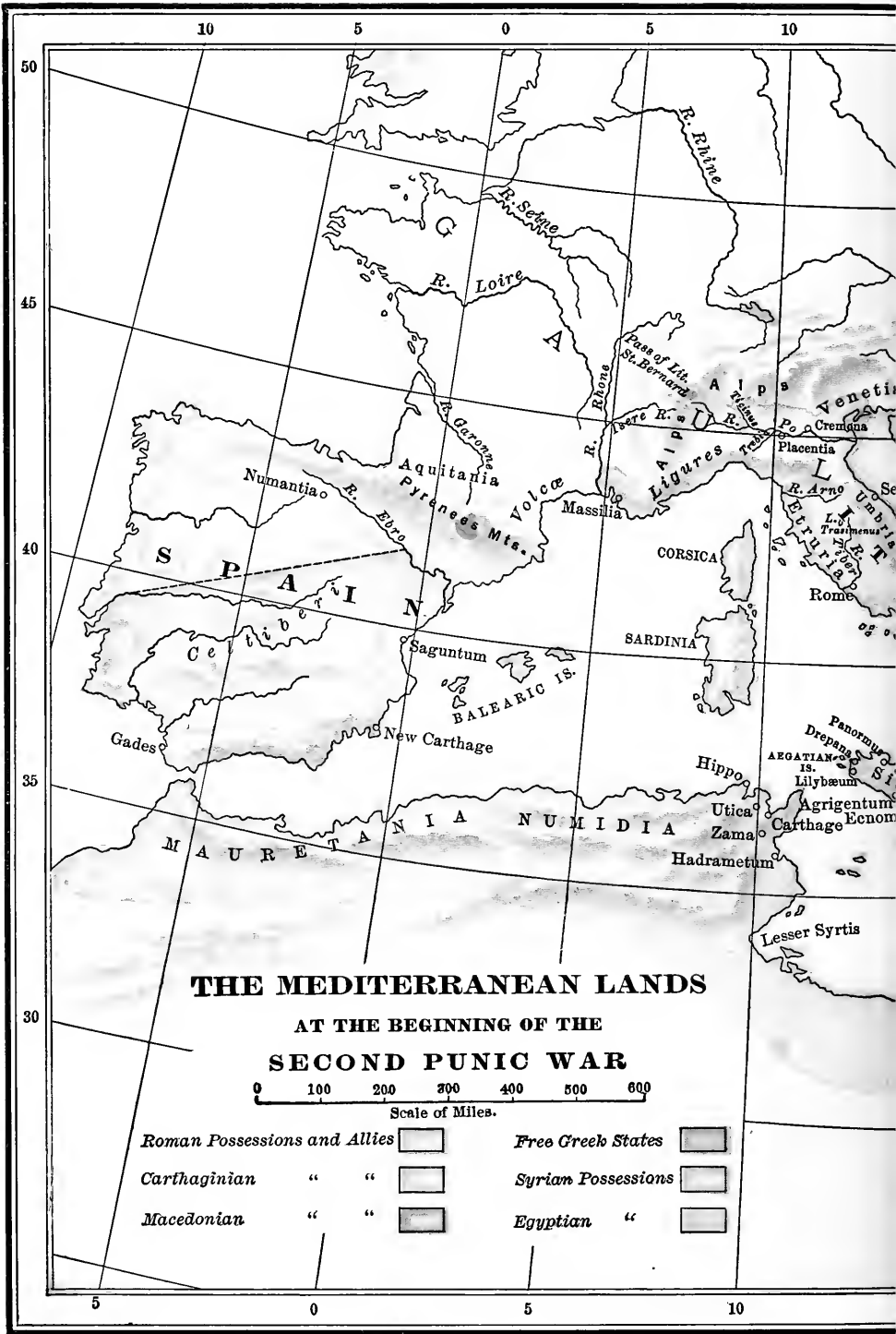
Meanwhile the barbarians had advanced into Etruria, ravaging the country as they moved southward. There they were surrounded by the Roman armies and almost annihilated (225 B.C.). The Romans, taking advantage of this victory, pushed on into the plains of the Po, captured the city now known as Milan, and extended their authority to the foothills of the Alps. To guard the new territory two Latin colonies, Placentia and Cremona, were established upon the opposite banks of the Po. The Gauls, thus reduced to subjection, were of course restless and resentful, and were very ready to embrace the cause of Hannibal when, a few years after this, he descended from the Alps and appeared among them as a deliverer.

**59. Carthage in the Truceless War (241-237 B.C.).** Scarcely had peace been concluded with Rome at the end of the First Punic War, before Carthage was plunged into a still deadlier struggle, which for a time threatened her very existence. Her mercenary troops, upon their return from Sicily, revolted on account of being unpaid. Their appeal to the native tribes of Africa was answered by a general uprising throughout the dependencies of Carthage. The extent of the revolt shows how hated was the rule of the great capital over her subject states. The war was unspeakably bitter and cruel. It is known in history as "the Truceless War." But the genius of the great Carthaginian general Hamilcar Barca at last triumphed, and the authority of Carthage was everywhere restored.

**60. The Carthaginians in Spain.** After the disastrous ending of the First Punic War, the Carthaginians sought to repair their losses by new conquests in Spain. Hamilcar Barca was sent over into that country, and for nine years he devoted his commanding genius to organizing the different Iberian tribes into a compact state, and to developing the rich gold and silver mines of the southern part of the peninsula. He fell in battle 228 B.C.

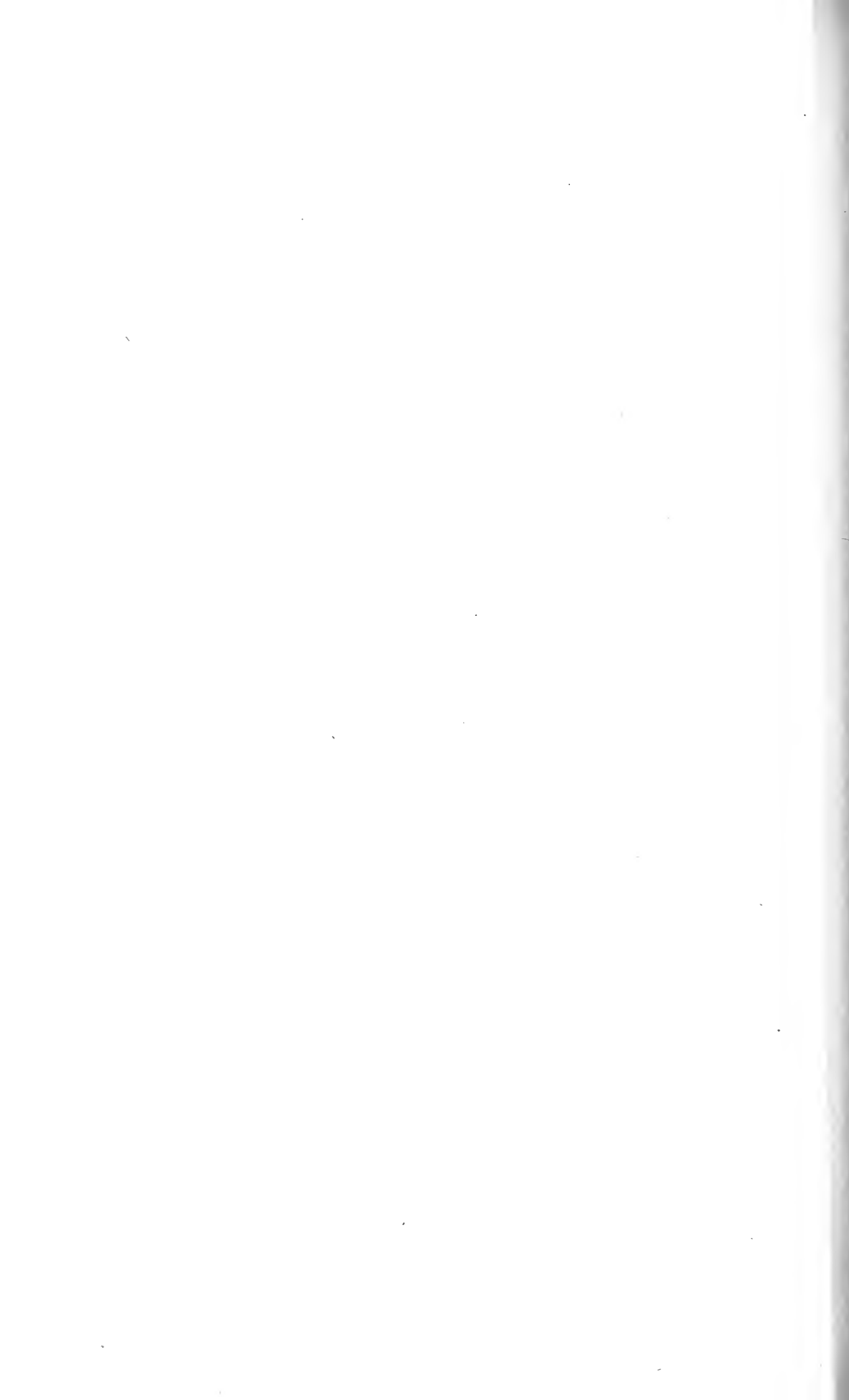
As a rule, genius is not transmitted; but in the Barcine family the rule was broken, and the rare genius of Hamilcar reappeared in his











sons, whom he himself, it is said, was fond of calling the "lion's brood." As Hannibal, the eldest, was only nineteen at the time of his father's death, and thus too young to assume command, Hamilcar was succeeded by his son-in-law, Hasdrubal.

**61. Hannibal's Vow ; he Attacks Saguntum.** Upon the death of Hasdrubal, which occurred 221 B.C., Hannibal, now twenty-six years of age, was by the unanimous voice of the army called to be its leader. When a child of nine years he had been led by his father to the altar, and there, with his hands upon the sacrifice, the little boy had sworn eternal hatred to the Roman race. He was driven on to his gigantic undertakings and to his hard fate not only by the restless fires of his warlike genius but, as he himself declared, by the sacred obligations of a vow that could not be broken.

In two years Hannibal extended the Carthaginian power to the Ebro. Saguntum, a native city upon the east coast of Spain, alone remained unsubdued. The Romans, who were jealously watching affairs in the peninsula, had entered into an alliance with this city, and taken it, with some Greek cities at the foot of the Pyrenees, under their protection. Hannibal laid siege to the place in the spring of 219 B.C. The Roman Senate sent messengers to him forbidding him to make war upon a city that was an ally of the Roman people ; but Hannibal, disregarding their remonstrances, continued the siege, and after an investment of eight months gained possession of the town.

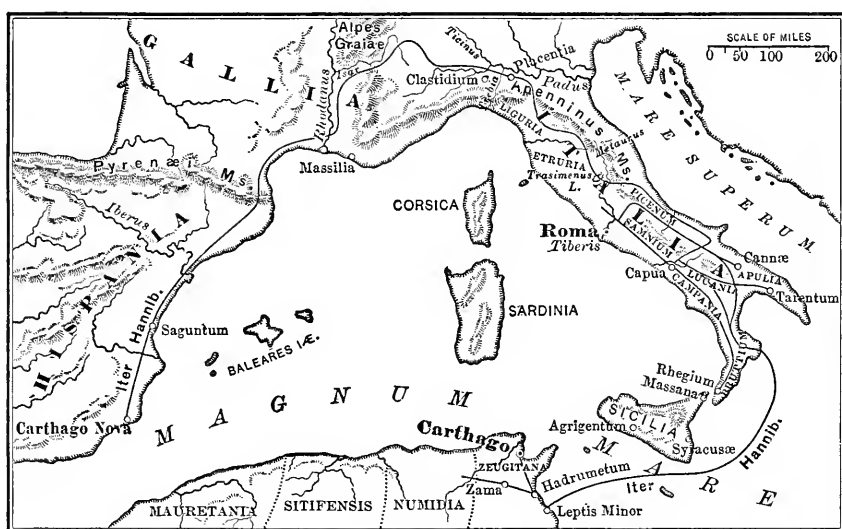
The Romans now sent commissioners to Carthage to demand of the senate that they give up Hannibal to them, and by so doing repudiate the act of their general. The Carthaginians hesitated. Then Quintus Fabius, chief of the embassy, gathering up his toga, said : " I carry here peace and war ; choose, men of Carthage, which ye will have." " Give us whichever ye will," was the reply. " War, then," said Fabius, dropping his toga.



FIG. 13. HANNIBAL

## III. THE SECOND PUNIC WAR (218-201 B.C.)

**62. Hannibal's Passage of the Alps.** The Carthaginian empire was now all astir with preparations for the mighty struggle. Hannibal was the life and soul of every movement. His bold plan was to cross the Pyrenees and the Alps and descend upon Rome from the north. Early in the spring of 218 B.C., he set out from New Carthage with an army numbering about one hundred thousand men and including thirty-seven war elephants. Traversing northern Spain and crossing



THE ROUTE OF HANNIBAL

the Pyrenees and the Rhone, he reached the foothills of the Alps, probably under the pass known to-day as the Little St. Bernard. The season was already far advanced, — it was October, — and snow was falling upon the higher portions of the trail, so that the passage of the mountains was accomplished only after severe toil and losses. At length the thinned columns, numbering less than thirty thousand men, issued from the defiles of the foothills upon the plains of the Po. This was the pitiable force with which Hannibal proposed to attack the Roman state — a state that at this time had on its levy lists over seven hundred thousand foot soldiers and seventy thousand horse.

**63. Fabius "the Delayer."** In three successive battles in northern Italy and Etruria,<sup>1</sup> the Romans suffered disastrous defeat, and two great Roman armies were almost annihilated. The way to Rome was now open. Believing that Hannibal would march directly upon the capital, the Senate caused the bridges that spanned the Tiber to be destroyed, and appointed Fabius Maximus dictator. But Hannibal did not deem it wise to throw his troops against the walls of Rome. Crossing the Apennines, he pressed eastward to the Adriatic, and then marched southward into Apulia. The fate of Rome was in the hands of Fabius. Should he risk a battle and lose it, everything would be lost. He determined to adopt a more prudent policy — to follow and annoy with his small force the Carthaginian army, but to refuse all proffers of battle. Thus time would be gained for raising a new army and perfecting measures for the public defense.

In every possible way Hannibal endeavored to draw his enemy into an engagement. He ravaged the fields far and wide and fired the homesteads of the Italians, in order to force Fabius to fight in their defense. The soldiers of the dictator began to murmur. They called him *Cunctator*, "the Delayer." But nothing moved him from the steady pursuit of the policy which he clearly saw was the only prudent one to follow.

**64. The Battle of Cannæ (216 B.C.).** The time gained by Fabius had enabled the Romans to raise and discipline an army that might hope to engage successfully the Carthaginian forces. Early in the summer of the year 216 B.C. these new levies, numbering eighty thousand men, under the command of the recently chosen consuls Paulus and Varro, confronted the army of Hannibal, amounting to not more than half that number, at Cannæ, on the banks of the Aufidus, in Apulia. It was the largest army Rome had ever gathered on any battlefield. Through the skillful maneuvers of Hannibal, the Romans were completely surrounded and huddled together in a helpless mass; then they were cut down by the Numidian cavalry. From forty to seventy thousand are said to have been slain:<sup>2</sup> a few thousand

<sup>1</sup> Battles of the Ticinus and the Trebia (218 B.C.), and Lake Trasimene (217 B.C.).

<sup>2</sup> Polybius (iii, 117) places the killed at 70,000 and the prisoners at 10,000; Livy (xxii, 49) puts the number of the slain at 42,700.

were taken prisoners; only a handful escaped. The slaughter was so great that, according to Livy, when Mago, a brother of Hannibal, carried the news of the victory to Carthage, he, in confirmation of the intelligence, poured out on the floor of the senate house nearly a peck of gold rings taken from the fingers of Roman knights.

**65. Events after the Battle of Cannæ.** The awful news flew to Rome. Consternation and despair seized the people. The city would have been emptied of its population had not the Senate ordered the gates to be closed. Never did that body display greater calmness, wisdom, and resolution. Little by little the panic was allayed. Measures were concerted for the defense of the capital, as it was expected that Hannibal would immediately march upon the city. Swift horsemen were sent out along the Appian Way to gather information of the conqueror's movements, and to learn, as Livy pathetically expresses it, "whether the immortal gods, out of pity to the empire, had left any remnant of the Roman name."

But Hannibal did not deem it prudent to fight the Romans behind their walls. He even sent an embassy to Rome to offer terms of peace. The Senate would not even permit the ambassadors to enter the gates, displaying in this what Polybius calls "the noble peculiarity," inherited from their ancestors, of constancy, unyielding firmness, and haughtiness in the face of defeat. Hardly less disappointed was Hannibal in the temper of the Roman confederates. All the allies of the Latin name adhered to Rome through all these trying times with unshaken loyalty. Some tribes in the south of Italy, however, now went over to the Carthaginians. Capua also seceded from Rome and entered into an alliance with Hannibal, who quartered his army for the winter following the battle of Cannæ in the luxurious city.<sup>1</sup> A little later Syracuse also was lost to Rome.

**66. The Fall of Syracuse (212 B.C.) and of Capua (211 B.C.).** While Hannibal was resting in Capua and awaiting reënforcements, Rome was busy raising and equipping new levies to take the place of the

<sup>1</sup> Hannibal's soldiers, it is said (Livy, xxiii, 18), passing the winter in a round of feasting, drinking, and indulgences of every kind, were fatally enervated in both body and mind by the influences of the Sybarite capital; whence the phrase "Capuan ease," meaning indolent self-indulgence which impairs one's physical and moral powers.

legions lost at Cannæ. The first task to be undertaken was the chastisement of Syracuse for its desertion of the Roman alliance. The distinguished general, Marcus Claudius Marcellus, called "the Sword of Rome," was intrusted with this commission. In the year 214 B.C. he laid siege to the city. For three years it held out against the Roman forces. It is said that Archimedes, the great mathematician, rendered valuable aid to the besieged with curious and powerful engines contrived by his genius. But the city fell at last and was given over to sack and pillage. Innumerable pictures were carried to Rome there to adorn the city and the homes of the rich.

Capua must next be punished for opening its gates and extending its hospitalities to the enemies of Rome. A line of circumvallation was drawn about the city, and two Roman armies held it in close siege. Hannibal endeavored to create a diversion in favor of his allies by making a dash on Rome,—legend says that he rang a defiant lance against one of the city gates,—but he failed to draw the legions from before Capua. The city soon fell, and paid the penalty that Rome never failed to inflict upon an unfaithful ally. The chief men of the place were put to death and a large part of the inhabitants sold as slaves (211 B.C.).

**67. Hasdrubal Attempts to Carry Aid to his Brother ; Battle of the Metaurus (207 B.C.).** During all the years Hannibal was waging war in Italy, his brother Hasdrubal was carrying on a desperate struggle with the Roman armies in Spain. At length he determined to leave the conduct of the war in that country to others and go to the relief of his brother, who was sadly in need of aid. He followed the same route that had been taken by Hannibal, and in the year 207 B.C. descended from the Alps upon the plains of northern Italy. Thence he advanced southward, while Hannibal moved northward from Bruttium to join him. Rome made a supreme effort to prevent the junction of the armies of the two brothers. At the river Metaurus, Hasdrubal's march was blocked by a large Roman army. Here his forces were cut to pieces, and he himself was slain (207 B.C.). His head was severed from his body and sent to Hannibal. Upon recognizing the features of his brother, Hannibal, it is said, exclaimed sadly, "Carthage, I read thy fate."

**68. The Romans Carry the War into Africa; Battle of Zama (202 B. C.).** Hannibal now drew back into the rocky peninsula of Brutium. There he faced the Romans like a lion at bay. No one dared attack him. It was resolved to carry the war into Africa, in hopes that the Carthaginians would be forced to call their great commander out of Italy to the defense of Carthage. Publius Cornelius Scipio led the army of invasion. He had not been long in Africa before the Carthaginian senate sent for Hannibal. At Zama, not far from Car-

thage, the hostile armies met. Hannibal here suffered his first and last defeat (202 B. C.).



FIG. 14. PUBLIUS CORNELIUS SCIPIO  
(AFRICANUS)

**69. The Close of the War (201 B. C.).** Carthage was now completely exhausted, and sued for peace. The terms of the treaty were much severer than those imposed upon the city at the end of the First Punic War. She was required to give up all claims to Spain and the islands of the Mediterranean; to surrender her

war elephants, and all her ships of war save ten galleys; to pay an indemnity of four thousand talents (about five million dollars) at once, and two hundred talents annually for fifty years; and not, under any circumstances, to make war upon an ally of Rome. Five hundred of the costly Phœnician war galleys were towed out of the harbor of Carthage and burned in full sight of the citizens.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Some time after the close of the Second Punic War, the Romans, persuading themselves that Hannibal was preparing Carthage for another war, demanded his surrender by the Carthaginians. He fled to Syria, and thence to Asia Minor, where, to avoid capture, he committed suicide by means of poison (183 B. C.).



Such was the end of the Hannibalic War, as it was called by the Romans. Scipio was accorded a grand triumph at Rome and in honor of his achievements given the surname *Africanus*.

**70. Effects of the War on Italy.** Italy never entirely recovered from the effects of the Hannibalic War. Three hundred thousand Roman citizens are said to have been slain in battle. Agriculture in some districts was almost ruined. The peasantry had been torn from the soil and driven within the walled towns. The slave class had increased, and the estates of the great landowners had constantly grown in size, and absorbed the little holdings of the ruined peasants. In thus destroying the Italian peasantry, Hannibal's invasion and long occupancy of the peninsula did much to aggravate those economic evils which even before this time were at work undermining the earlier sound life of the Romans and filling Italy with a numerous and dangerous class of homeless and discontented men.

#### IV. EVENTS BETWEEN THE SECOND AND THE THIRD PUNIC WAR (201-146 B.C.)

**71. Introductory.** The terms imposed upon Carthage at the end of the Second Punic War left Rome mistress of the western Mediterranean. During the eventful half century that elapsed between the close of that struggle and the breaking out of the Third Punic War, her authority became supreme also in the eastern Mediterranean. In another place, while narrating the fortunes of the most important states into which the great empire of Alexander was broken at his death, we followed their several histories until, one after another, they fell beneath the arms of Rome, and were absorbed into her growing dominions.<sup>1</sup> We shall therefore in this place speak of these states only in the briefest manner, merely indicating the connection of their affairs with the series of events which mark the advance of Rome to universal empire. Our main interest in these events will be in observing how Rome became ever more and more involved in the affairs of the East, and in noting the growing enthusiasm of the Romans for things Hellenic.

<sup>1</sup> See *Eastern Nations and Greece* (2nd Rev. Ed.), chap. xxvi.

**72. The Second Macedonian War**<sup>1</sup> (200-197 B.C.); "the Restoration of Greek Freedom." Rome came first into hostile relations with Macedonia. During the Second Punic War Philip V of that kingdom had entered into an alliance with Hannibal. He was now troubling the Greek cities. They appealed to Rome, whose prestige was now great, for protection. Rome, moved both by fear of what Philip might do and by a genuine admiration for the great past of Greece, listened favorably to the appeal. Such was the prelude to what is known as the Second Macedonian War.

In the third year of the war an army under Flaminius was sent into Greece, and on the plains of Cynoscephalæ, in Thessaly, the supple Roman legion demonstrated its superiority over the rigid Macedonian phalanx by subjecting Philip to a most disastrous defeat (197 B.C.). The king was forced to give up all his conquests, and all the Greek cities that he had been holding in subjection were declared free. The edict of emancipation was read by a herald to the Greeks assembled at Corinth for the celebration of the Isthmian games. It ran thus: "The Roman people and Senate and Flaminius their general . . . order that Greece shall be free from foreign garrisons, shall not be subject to tribute, and shall live under her own customs and laws."

The decree was received with the greatest enthusiasm and rejoicing. "A shout was raised," says Plutarch, "that was heard as far as the sea coast." Flaminius was hailed as the "Restorer of Greek Liberties." But unfortunately the Greeks had lost all capacity for freedom and self-government, and the anarchy into which their affairs soon fell afforded the Romans a valid excuse for extending their rule over all Greece.

**73. War against Antiochus the Great of Syria (192-189 B.C.).** Antiochus the Great of Syria had at this time not only made important conquests in Asia Minor but had even carried his arms into Europe. He was at this moment in Greece. The object of his presence in these regions, he declared, was to give liberty to the Greek cities. But the Greeks, as Plutarch remarks, were at this particular

<sup>1</sup> The First Macedonian War (215-206 B.C.) took place during the Second Punic War and was an episode of that struggle.

time in no need of a liberator, since they had just been delivered from the Macedonians by the Romans.

Just as soon as intelligence was carried to Italy that the Syrian king was in Greece, at the head of an army, the legions of the Republic were set in motion. Some reverses caused Antiochus to retreat in haste across the sea to Asia, whither he was followed by the Romans. At Magnesia, Antiochus was overthrown, and much of Asia Minor fell into the hands of the Romans. Not yet prepared to maintain provinces so remote from the Tiber, the Senate conferred a great part of the new territory upon their "friend and ally," Eumenes, king of Pergamum.

**74. The Third Macedonian War (171-168 B.C.).** And now Macedonia, under the leadership of Perseus, son of Philip V, was again in war with Rome. On the memorable field of Pydna (168 B.C.) the Roman consul, Æmilius Paulus, crushed the Macedonian power forever. The country was broken up into four states, and a little later these were organized as a Roman province. The great rôle which Macedonia, as an independent state, had played in history was ended.

But the battle of Pydna constitutes a great landmark not merely in the history of Macedonia: it forms a landmark in universal history as well. It was one of the decisive battles fought by the Romans in their struggle for the dominion of the world. The last great power in the East was here broken.<sup>1</sup> The Roman Senate was henceforth recognized by the whole civilized world as the source and fountain of supreme political wisdom and authority. We have yet to record many campaigns of the Roman legions; but these, if we except the campaigns against the Pontic king Mithradates the Great, were efforts to suppress revolt among dependent or semivassal states, or were expeditions aimed at barbarian tribes that skirted the Roman dominions.

**75. The Achæan War and the Destruction of Corinth (146 B.C.).** During the third war between Rome and Macedonia, a party in the cities of the Achæan League had shown themselves lukewarm in their friendship for Rome. Consequently, after the battle of Pydna,

<sup>1</sup> Mithradates the Great had not yet appeared to dispute with Rome the sovereignty of the Orient (sect. 95).

the Romans collected a thousand prominent citizens of these federated cities and transported them to Italy, where they were to stand trial for alleged unfriendliness towards Rome. They were never tried, however, but for seventeen years were held as hostages for the good conduct of their countrymen at home. Among these exiles was the celebrated historian Polybius, who wrote an account of all these events which we are now narrating and which mark the advance of Rome to the sovereignty of the world.

At the end of the period named, the Roman Senate, in an indulgent mood, gave the survivors permission to return home. They went back burning with a sense of wrong, and their presence in the home cities doubtless added to the intensity of the ill feeling that had been growing against Rome. The people of Corinth particularly displayed the most unreasonable and vehement hostility toward the Romans. There could be but one issue of this foolish conduct, and that was war with Rome.

This came in the year 147 B.C. Corinth was soon in the hands of the Romans. The men were killed, and the women and children sold into slavery. Much of the booty was sold on the spot at public auction. Numerous works of art — invaluable statues and paintings, with which the city was crowded — were laid aside to be transported to Rome, but a large part of the rich art treasures of the city must have been destroyed by the rude and unappreciative soldiers. Polybius, who was an eye-witness of the sack of the city, himself saw groups of soldiers using priceless paintings as boards on which to play their games of dice.

The despoiled city, in obedience to the command of the Roman Senate, was given up to the flames, its walls were leveled, and the very ground on which the city had stood was accursed. Thus fell the brilliant city of Corinth, the "last precious ornament of the Grecian land once so rich in cities."<sup>1</sup>

**76. The General Effect upon Rome of her Conquest of the East.** In entering Greece the Romans had entered the homeland of Greek culture, with which they had first come in close contact in Magna

<sup>1</sup> At a later period, Greece, under the name of *Achaëa*, was reduced to the status of a province and joined to Macedonia.

Græcia. This culture was in many respects vastly superior to their own, and for this reason it exerted a profound influence upon life and thought at Rome. Many among the Romans seem to have conceived a sudden contempt for everything Roman, as something provincial and old-fashioned, and as suddenly to have become infatuated with everything Greek. Greek manners and customs, Greek modes of education, and Greek literature and philosophy became the fashion at Rome, so that Roman society seemed in a fair way of becoming Hellenized. And to a certain degree this did take place: Greece captive led enthralled her captor. So many and so important were the elements of Greek culture which in the process of time were taken up and absorbed by the Romans that there ceased to be such a thing in the world as a pure Latin civilization. We recognize this intimate blending of the cultures of the two great peoples of classical antiquity when we speak of the civilization of the later Roman Empire as being Græco-Roman.

But along with the many helpful elements of culture which the Romans received from the East, they received also many germs of great social and moral evils. Life in Greece and in the Orient had become degenerate and corrupt. Close communication with this society, in union with other influences which we shall notice later, corrupted life at Rome. "To learn Greek is to learn knavery" became a proverb. The simplicity and frugality of the earlier times were replaced by oriental extravagance, luxury, and dissoluteness. Evidences of this decline in the moral life of the Romans, the presage of the downfall of the Republic, will multiply as we advance in the history of the years following the destruction of Corinth.

**77. Cato the Censor.** One of the most noted of the Romans of this time was Marcus Porcius Cato (surnamed the Censor), 232–147 B.C. His active life covered the whole of the long period—the chief events of which we have just been narrating—which makes up the interval between the Second and the Third Punic War. Indeed, Cato as a young man fought in the Hannibalic War, and as an old counselor did more than any other person to bring on the third war, which resulted in the destruction of Carthage. His life is a mirror in which is reflected the life of three generations at Rome.

Cato was born the son of a peasant at Tusculum, in Latium. From his father he received as an inheritance a scanty farm in the Sabine country. Near by were the cottage and farm of the celebrated Roman commander Manius Curius Dentatus, one of the popular heroes of the Samnite wars, of whom tradition related that, when the Samnites on one occasion sought to bribe him, they found him cooking turnips, and wanting nothing that they could give him. This worthy old Roman, Cato took as his model.

As we have seen, at just this time Greek ideas and customs were being introduced at Rome. Cato set his face like a flint against all these innovations. He did everything in his power to cast discredit and contempt upon everything Greek. He visited Athens and made a speech to the people; but instead of addressing the Athenians in their own language, which he could speak well enough, he talked to them in Latin, simply in order, Plutarch says, to rebuke those of his countrymen who affected to regard the Greek language as better than the Roman. He told the Romans that Greek education and Greek literature and philosophy would bring their country to ruin. He wished to see all the Greek teachers of philosophy sent back home. He refused to allow his little son to be taught by a Greek slave, as was coming to be the custom in the leading Roman families, but he himself attended carefully to the education of the boy.

One of the most unattractive, and, indeed, to us, repellent, sides of Cato's character is revealed in his treatment of his slaves. He looked upon them precisely as so much live stock, raising them and disposing of them just as though they were cattle. When a slave became old or worn out he sold him, and recommended such a course to others on the ground of its economy.

But notwithstanding all of Cato's faults and shortcomings his character was, according to Roman ideals, noble and admirable, and his life and services, especially those which he rendered the state as censor, were approved and appreciated by his fellow-citizens, who set up in his honor a statue with this inscription: "This statue was erected to Cato because when censor, finding the state of Rome corrupt and degenerate, he, by introducing wise regulations and virtuous discipline, restored it."

## V. THE THIRD PUNIC WAR (149-146 B.C.)

**78. "Carthage should be Destroyed."** The same year that Rome destroyed Corinth she also blotted from the face of the earth her great rival Carthage. It will be recalled that one of the conditions imposed upon the city at the close of the Second Punic War was that she should under no circumstances engage in war with an ally of Rome (sect. 69). Taking advantage of the helpless condition of Carthage, Masinissa, king of Numidia and an ally of Rome, began to make depredations upon her territories. Carthage appealed to Rome for protection. The envoys sent to Africa by the Senate to settle the dispute, unfairly adjudged every point in favor of the robber Masinissa.

Chief of one of the embassies sent out was Marcus Cato the Censor. When he saw the prosperity of Carthage—her immense trade, which crowded her harbor with ships, and the country for miles back of the city a beautiful landscape of gardens and villas—he was amazed at the growing power and wealth of the city, and returned home convinced that the safety of Rome demanded the destruction of her rival. All of his addresses after this—no matter on what subject—he is said invariably to have closed with the declaration, "Moreover, Carthage should be destroyed." Better advice was given by Publius Scipio, who, it is said, in opposition to Cato, ended all his speeches with the words, "Moreover, Carthage should be let alone."

**79. Roman Perfidy.** A pretext for destroying the city was not long wanting. In 150 B.C. the Carthaginians, when Masinissa made another attack upon their territory, instead of calling upon Rome, from which source experience had taught them they could hope for neither aid nor justice, gathered an army with the resolution of defending themselves. Their forces, however were defeated by the Numidians and sent beneath the yoke.

In entering upon this war Carthage had broken the conditions of the last treaty. The Carthaginian senate, in great anxiety, now sent an embassy to Italy to offer any reparation the Romans might demand. They were told that if they would give three hundred hostages, children of the noblest Carthaginian families, the independence

of their city should be respected. They eagerly complied with this demand. But no sooner were these hostages in the hands of the Romans than the consular armies, thus secured against attack, crossed from Sicily into Africa, and disembarked at Utica, only ten miles from Carthage.

The Carthaginians were now commanded to give up all their arms. Still hoping to win their enemy to clemency, they complied with this demand also. Then the consuls made known the final decree of the Roman Senate — "That Carthage must be destroyed, but that the inhabitants might build a new city, provided it were located ten miles from the coast."

When this resolution of the Senate was announced to the Carthaginians and they realized the baseness and perfidy of their enemy, a cry of indignation and despair burst from the betrayed city.

**80. The Carthaginians Prepare to Defend their City.** It was resolved to resist to the bitter end the execution of the cruel decree. The gates of the city were closed. Men, women, and children set to work and labored day and night manufacturing arms. The entire city was converted into one great workshop. Statues, vases, the utensils of the home, and the sacred vessels of the temples were melted down for weapons. Material was torn from the buildings of the city for the construction of military engines. The women cut off their hair and braided it into strings for the catapults. By such labor and through such sacrifices the city was soon put in a state to withstand a siege.

When the Romans advanced to take possession of the place, they were astonished to find the people they had just now so treacherously disarmed, with weapons in their hands, manning the walls of their capital and ready to bid them defiance.

**81. The Destruction of Carthage (146 B.C.).** For four years the city held out against the Roman army. At length the consul Scipio Æmilianus<sup>1</sup> succeeded in taking it by storm. When resistance ceased only fifty thousand men, women, and children, out of a population of several hundred thousand, remained to be made prisoners. The city

<sup>1</sup> Publius Cornelius Scipio Æmilianus, grandson by adoption of Scipio Africanus, the conqueror of Hannibal. After his conquest of Carthage he was known as *Africanus Minor*.



was set on fire, and for seventeen days the space within the walls was a sea of flames. Every trace of building which fire could not destroy was leveled, a plough was driven over the site, and a dreadful curse invoked upon any one who should dare attempt to rebuild the city.

Such was the hard fate of Carthage. Polybius,<sup>1</sup> who was an eye-witness of the destruction of the city, records that Scipio, as he gazed upon the smoldering ruins, seemed to read in them the fate of Rome, and, bursting into tears, sadly repeated the lines of Homer :

The day shall be when holy Troy shall fall  
And Priam, lord of spears, and Priam's folk.<sup>2</sup>

The Carthaginian territory in Africa was made into a Roman province, with Utica as the leading city; and by means of traders and settlers Roman civilization was spread rapidly throughout the regions that lie between the ranges of the Atlas and the sea.

**82. The Significance of Rome's Triumph over Carthage.** The triumph of Rome over Carthage may perhaps rightly be given as prominent a place in history as the triumph, more than three centuries before, of Greece over Persia. In each case Europe was saved from the threatened danger of becoming a mere dependency or extension of Asia.

The Semitic Carthaginians had not the political aptitude and moral energy that characterized the Italians and the other Aryan peoples of Europe. Their civilization was as lacking as the Persian in elements of growth and expansion. Had this civilization been spread by conquest throughout Europe, the germs of political, literary, artistic, and religious life among the Aryans of the continent might have been smothered, and their history have been rendered as barren in political and intellectual interests as the later history of the races of the Orient.

It is these considerations which justify the giving of the battle of the Metaurus, which marks the real turning point in the long struggle between Rome and Carthage, a place along with the battle of Marathon in the short list of the really decisive battles of the

<sup>1</sup> It was usual for great Romans to have in their train a Greek philosopher or scholar as a companion.

<sup>2</sup> *Iliad*, vi, 448.

world — battles which, determining the trend of great currents of history, have seemingly decided the fate of races, of continents, and of civilizations.

**83. The Capture and Destruction of Numantia (133 B.C.).** It is fitting that the same chapter which narrates the blotting out of Corinth in Greece and of Carthage in Africa should tell also the story of the destruction, at the hands of the Romans, of Numantia in Spain.

The Romans had expelled the Carthaginians from the peninsula, but the warlike native tribes — the Celtiberians and Lusitanians — of the North and the West were ready to dispute stubbornly with the newcomers the possession of the soil. The war gathered about Numantia, the siege of which was brought to a close by Scipio Æmilianus, the conqueror of Carthage. Before the surrender of the place, almost all the inhabitants had met death either in defense of the walls or by deliberate suicide. The miserable remnant which the ravages of battle, famine, pestilence, and despair had left alive were sold into slavery, and the city was leveled to the ground (133 B.C.).

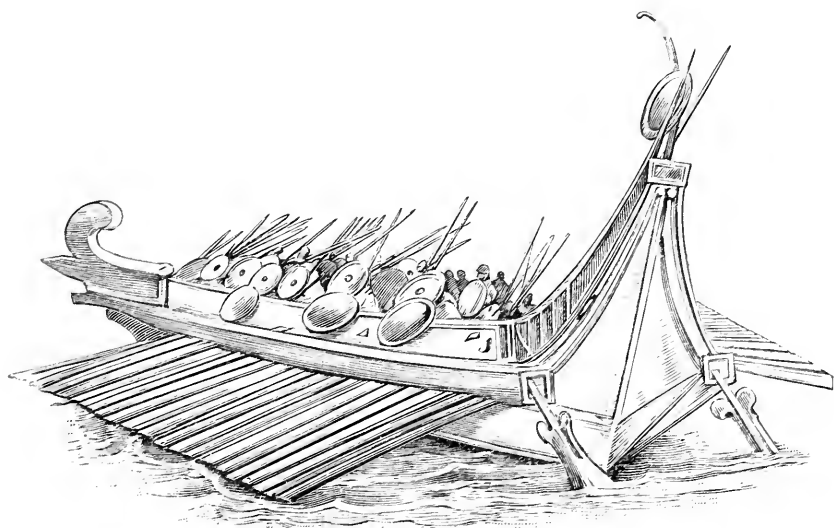
Though ever since the Second Punic War Spain had been regarded as forming a part of the Roman dominions, yet now for the first time it really became a Roman possession. Roman merchants and settlers crowded into the country. As a result of this great influx of Italians, the laws, the manners, the customs, and the language of the conquerors were introduced everywhere, so that the peninsula became in time thoroughly Romanized. Thus was laid the basis of two of the Romance nations of modern times — the Spanish and the Portuguese.

**Selections from the Sources.** POLYBIUS, i, 10-63 (for an account of the First Punic War); xxxviii, 3-11 (the cause of the fall of Greece); xxxix, 3-5 (the fall of Carthage; it should be remembered that Polybius here writes as an eye-witness of the scenes that he describes). PLUTARCH, *Fabius Maximus* and *Marcus Cato*. Munro's *Source Book*, pp. 78-100; Davis's *Readings* (Rome), pp. 53-84.

**Secondary Works.** MOMMSEN, vol. ii, bk. iii, chaps. i-xiv. HEITLAND, vol. i, chaps. xxi-xxvi; vol. ii, chaps. xxvii-xxxiv. PELHAM, *Outlines of Roman History*, bk. iii, chaps. i-iii. HOW and LEIGH, *History of Rome*, chaps. xvii-xxx. SMITH, *Carthage and the Carthaginians* and *Rome and Carthage*. ARNOLD, *The Roman System of Provincial Administration*, chap. i. ARNOLD, *History of Rome*, chaps. xliii-xlvii (these chapters are generally regarded as the best

account ever written of the Second Punic War). DODGE, *Hannibal*. MORRIS, *Hannibal*. MAHAN, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*, pp. 14-21. CHURCH, *Story of Carthage* (interesting for younger classes).

**Topics for Class Reports.** 1. Hannibal's passage of the Alps: Polybius iii, 50-56. 2. The battle of the Metaurus (207 B.C.): Creasy, *Decisive Battles of the World*, chap. iv. 3. Change effected in Roman life and manners through contact with corrupt Hellenism: Mommsen, vol. ii, bk. iii, chap. xiii, pp. 480-491; Plutarch, *Marcus Cato*; Seignobos (Wilde ed.), *History of Ancient Civilization*, chap. xxii.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE LAST CENTURY OF THE REPUBLIC: THE PERIOD OF REVOLUTION

(133-31 B.C.)

**84. Introductory.** We have now traced in broad outlines the development of the institutions of republican Rome, and have told briefly the story of that wonderful career of conquest which made the little Palatine city the mistress first of Latium, then of Italy, and finally of the greater part of the Mediterranean world. In the present chapter we shall follow the fortunes of the Republic through the last century of its existence. During this time, though the territorial expansion went on, many agencies were at work undermining the institutions of the Republic and paving the way for the Empire. What these agencies were will best be made apparent by a simple narration of the events that crowd this memorable period of Roman history.

**85. The First Servile War in Sicily (135-132 B.C.).** With the opening of this period we find a terrible struggle going on in Sicily between masters and slaves—what is known as the First Servile War. The condition of affairs in that island was the outgrowth of the Roman system of slavery.

The captives that the Romans took in war they usually sold into servitude. The great number furnished by their numerous conquests had caused slaves to become a drug in the slave markets of the Mediterranean world. They were so cheap that masters found it more profitable to wear their slaves out by a few years of unmercifully hard labor and then to buy others than to preserve their lives for a longer period by more humane treatment. Often in case of sickness they were left to die without attention, as the expense of nursing exceeded the cost of new purchases. Some estates were worked by as many as twenty thousand slaves. That each owner

might know his own, the poor creatures were branded like cattle. What makes all this the more revolting is the fact that many of these slaves were in every way the peers, and some the superiors, of their owners. The fortunes of war alone had made the one a servant and the other a master.

The wretched condition of the slaves in Sicily,<sup>1</sup> where the slave system exhibited some of its worst features, and the cruelty of their masters at last drove them to revolt. The insurrection spread throughout the island until two hundred thousand slaves were in arms—if axes, reaping hooks, staves, and roasting spits may be called arms. They defeated four Roman armies sent against them, and for three years defied the power of Rome. Finally, however, in the year 132 B.C., the uprising was suppressed. Twenty thousand of the unhappy slaves are said to have been crucified. Sicily was thus pacified, and remained quiet for nearly a generation.<sup>2</sup>

**86. The Public Lands.** In Italy itself affairs were in a scarcely less wretched condition than in Sicily. At the bottom of a large part of the social and economic troubles here was the public-land system. By law or custom those portions of the public lands which remained unsold or unallotted as homesteads were open to any one to till or to pasture. In return for such use of the public land the user paid the state usually a fifth or a tenth of the yearly produce. Persons who availed themselves of this privilege were called possessors or occupiers; we should call them "squatters" or "tenants at will."

Now it had happened that, in various ways, the greater part of these public lands had fallen into the hands of the wealthy. They alone had the capital necessary to stock with cattle and slaves the new lands, and hence they were the sole occupiers of them. The small farmers everywhere, too, were being ruined by the unfair competition of slave labor, and their little holdings were passing by purchase, and often by fraud or barefaced robbery, into the hands of the great proprietors.

<sup>1</sup> Only a few years before this, upon the destruction of Carthage, thousands of captives, masters along with their slaves, were sold to Sicilian slave-traders and transferred to Sicily.

<sup>2</sup> In the year 102 B.C. another insurrection of the slaves broke out in the island, which it required three years to quell.

There was a law, it is true, which made it illegal for any person to occupy more than a prescribed amount of the public lands; but this law had long since become a dead letter. The greater part of the lands of Italy, about the beginning of the first century B.C., are said to have been held by not more than two thousand persons. These great landowners found stock-raising more profitable than working the soil. Hence Italy had been made into a great sheep pasture. The dispossessed peasants, left without home or employment, crowded into the cities, congregating especially at Rome, where they lived in vicious indolence. Thus, largely through the workings of the public land system, the Roman people had become divided into two great classes—the rich and the poor, the possessors and the nonpossessors.

**87. Reforms of the Gracchi; Tiberius Gracchus (133 B.C.).** The ablest champions of the cause of the poor against the rich and powerful were the celebrated brothers Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus, sons of Cornelia, the daughter of Scipio Africanus, the conqueror of Hannibal. Aside from their noble birth, they had been carefully nurtured by a mother noted not alone for her acquaintance with the new Greek learning, but also for the superior qualities of her mind and heart. It was Tiberius, the elder of the brothers, who first undertook the cause of reform. The resolution to consecrate his life to the alleviation of the distress among the poor and disinherited citizens of Rome is said to have been taken by him while traveling through Etruria, where he saw the mischief and distress caused by the usurpation of the soil by the great landowners, and the displacement of the peasant farmers by swarms of barbarian slaves.

Elected by the people to the tribuneship for the year 133 B.C., Tiberius as tribune brought forward a proposal which took away from the great proprietors all the public lands they were occupying over and above a specified amount. The lands thus resumed by the state were to be allotted in small holdings of a few acres each to poor citizens.

As was natural, the senatorial party, who represented the wealthy landowners, bitterly opposed the measures brought forward by Tiberius. They resorted to an old device for thwarting a tribune whose

proposals were obnoxious to them. They persuaded one of the colleagues of Tiberius, the tribune Octavius, to interpose his veto. Octavius did this, and thus prevented the proposals from being brought to a vote in the popular assembly.<sup>1</sup>

The deadlock was broken by Tiberius, and in this way. Through the votes of his partisans in an assembly of the people he deposed his colleague Octavius. But Octavius refused to acknowledge the validity of such a vote; then Tiberius caused him to be dragged from the Rostra by freedmen. Never before since the first year of the Republic had the Romans deposed one of their magistrates in this way from the office to which they had elected him. The sanctity of the constitution, the inviolability of which had been the safeguard of the state for a period of almost four centuries, was destroyed. It was the beginning of the end.

After the deposition of Octavius, a client of Tiberius was chosen to fill his place. Tiberius' proposal was now made a law, and a board of commissioners was appointed to carry out its provisions and to prevent the law from becoming a dead letter, as had happened in the case of the earlier law.

To make himself secure for the future against the revenge of the nobility, Tiberius now became a candidate for a second term as tribune. This was unconstitutional, for at this time a tribune could not hold his office for two consecutive years. Naturally the enemies of Tiberius opposed his reëlection. Rome was in a seething tumult; rioting began. The partisans of Tiberius were overpowered, and he and a number of his followers were killed and their bodies thrown into the Tiber. This was the first time since the creation of the plebeian tribunate that the contention of parties in Rome had led to an appeal to open force, the first time that the city had witnessed such a scene of violence and blood. But such scenes were very soon to become common enough.

**88. Tribune of Gaius Gracchus (123-122 B.C.).** Gaius Gracchus now came forward to assume the position made vacant by the death of his brother Tiberius. In the year 124 B.C. he was elected tribune

<sup>1</sup> Each member of the board of tribunes had the right thus to veto the act of any or of all of his colleagues, just as one of the consuls could obstruct the act of his colleague.

for the following year. As quæstor in Sardinia he had proved that he was of a different mold from the ordinary Roman magistrate. He had "left Rome," as Plutarch puts it, "with his purse full of money and had brought it back empty; others had taken out jars full of wine and had brought them back full of money."

Once in the tribuneship, Gaius entered straightway with marvelous energy and resourcefulness upon the work of reform. His aim was to destroy the government of the Senate, now hopelessly incapable and corrupt, and to set up in its place a new government with himself at its head. First, he secured the passage of a law by the people which made it constitutional for a tribune to hold his office two years in succession. This meant, of course, the virtual transformation of the tribuneship into a possible life-tenure office. He next won the affection of the poor of the city by carrying a law which provided that every Roman citizen, on personal application, should be given corn from the public granaries at half or less than half the market price. Gaius could not have foreseen all the evils to which this law, which was in effect what we know as a poor law, was destined to lead. It led eventually to the free distribution of corn to all citizens who made application for it. Very soon a large proportion of the population of Rome was living in vicious indolence and feeding at the public crib.<sup>1</sup>

As a further measure of relief for the poorer traders and the artisan class, Gaius established new colonies in Italy, and sent six thousand settlers, comprising Italians as well as Roman citizens, to the site of Carthage, and founded there a colony called Junonia. This was the first citizen-colony established by the Romans outside of Italy.

Another measure now proposed by Gaius alienated a large section of his followers, and paved the way for his downfall. This proposal seems to have been that all the Latins should be made full Roman citizens, and that the Italian allies should be given the rights and

<sup>1</sup> By another law Gaius made friends of the knights (*equites*), the rich merchants and bankers, between whom and the senatorial order there was much jealousy and ill will. This law transferred the courts in which provincial magistrates accused of wrong-doing were tried from the senatorial to this rival equestrian order. Thereby Gaius won the favor of this powerful class.



privileges then enjoyed by the Latins (sect. 92). Gaius was in this matter out of touch with his times. The masses were unwilling to confer the rights of the city upon those still without them, for the reason that citizenship now, since the whole world was paying tribute in one form or another to the ruling class in the Roman state, was something valuable. The proposal was defeated, and the popularity of Gaius visibly declined. When he stood the third time for reelection as tribune he was defeated. Without the protection of his office his life was in danger. His friends rallied around him. Fighting took place in the streets between the contending factions. Gaius in despair took his own life, and three thousand of his followers were killed.

The consul Lucius Opimius had offered for the head of Gaius and that of one of his partisans their weight in gold. The persons who brought in the heads appear to have received the promised reward. "This is the first instance in Roman history of head money being offered and paid, but it was not the last" (Long).

The common people ever regarded the Gracchi as martyrs to their cause, and their memory was preserved, in later times, by statues in the public square. To Cornelia, their mother, a monument was erected, bearing the simple inscription, "The Mother of the Gracchi."

**89. The War with Jugurtha (111-106 B.C.).** After the death of the Gracchi there seemed no one left to resist the heartless oppressions of the aristocratic party. The Gracchan laws respecting the public lands were annulled or made of no effect. Italy fell again into the hands of a few overrich landowners. The provinces were plundered by the Roman governors. The votes of senators and the decisions of judges, the offices at Rome and the places in the provinces — everything pertaining to the government had its price, and was bought and sold like merchandise. This is well illustrated by affairs in Africa.

Jugurtha, king of Numidia, had seized all that country, having put to death the rightful rulers of different provinces, who had been confirmed in their possessions by the Romans at the close of the Punic wars. Commissioners sent from Rome to look into the matter were bribed by Jugurtha. An investigation was ordered; but many prominent officials at Rome were implicated in the offenses, and the matter

was hushed up with money. The venality of the Romans disgusted even Jugurtha, who exclaimed, "O venal city, thou wouldst sell thyself if thou couldst find a purchaser!"

In the year 106 B.C. the war begun five years before against Jugurtha was brought to a close by Gaius Marius, a man who had risen to the consulship from the lowest ranks of the people. Under him fought a young nobleman named Sulla, "a degenerate Sybarite," of whom we shall hear much hereafter.

**90. Invasion of the Cimbri and Teutons (113-101 B.C.).** The war was not yet ended in Africa before terrible tidings came to Rome from the north. Two mighty nations of "horrible barbarians," three hundred thousand strong in fighting men, coming whence no one could tell, had invaded and were now desolating the lands of southern Gaul, and might any moment cross the Alps and sweep down into Italy.

The mysterious invaders proved to be two Germanic tribes, the Teutons and Cimbri, the vanguard of that great German migration which was destined to change the face and history of Europe. These intruders were seeking new homes. They carried with them in rude wagons all their property, their wives, and their children. The Celtic tribes of Gaul were no match for the newcomers, and fled before them as they advanced. Several Roman armies, the guardians of the Gallic province of Narbonensis and of the passes of the Alps, were cut to pieces. The terror at Rome was only equaled by that occasioned by the invasion of the Gauls three centuries before (sect. 40). The Gauls were terrible enough; but now the conquerors of the Gauls were coming.

Marius, the conqueror of Jugurtha, was looked to by all as the only man who could save the state in this crisis. In disregard of the constitution<sup>1</sup> he was reëlected to the consulship, and intrusted with the command of the armies. The barbarians had divided into two bands. The Cimbri were to cross the eastern Alps and join in the valley of the Po the Teutons, who were to force the defiles of the western Alps. Marius determined to prevent the union of the barbarians and to crush each band separately.

<sup>1</sup> According to a law passed in 180 B.C., no citizen could be reëlected to any magistracy until after an interval of ten years.

Anticipating the march of the Teutons, Marius hurried into southern Gaul, and falling upon the barbarians at a favorable moment almost annihilated the entire host.<sup>1</sup> He now recrossed the Alps and hastened to meet the Cimbri, who were entering the northeastern corner of Italy. Uninformed as to the fate of the Teutons, the Cimbri sent an embassy to Marius to demand that they and their kinsmen be given lands in the peninsula. Marius sent back in reply, "The Teutons have got all the land they need on the other side of the Alps." The devoted Cimbri were soon to have all they needed on this side.

A terrible battle almost immediately followed at Vercellæ (101 B.C.). More than one hundred thousand of the barbarians were killed, and sixty thousand taken prisoners to be sold as slaves in the Roman slave markets.

**91. Changes in the Army.** Up to this period a property qualification had been required of the legionary. Only in times of great public peril had propertyless citizens been called upon for military service. Foreign mercenaries, it is true, had found a place in the army, but not in the legions. Marius now gave permission to citizens without property to enlist. From this time on, the ranks of the Roman armies were filled almost entirely, as in the case of our own standing army, by voluntary enlistments. This tended, of course, to create a class of poor professional soldiers, who became in effect the clients of their general, looked to him to secure them war-booty, and, at the expiration of their term of enlistment, grants of public lands; and who were ready to follow him in all kinds of undertakings, even in undertakings against the commonwealth.

**92. The Social or Marsic War (91-89 B.C.).** Scarcely was the danger of the barbarian invasion past before Rome was threatened by another and greater evil arising within her own borders. At this time all the free inhabitants of Italy were embraced in three classes — *Roman citizens*, *Latins*, and *Italian allies*. The Roman citizens included the inhabitants of the capital, of the towns called *municipia*, and of the Roman colonies (sect. 48), besides the dwellers on isolated farms and the inhabitants of villages scattered everywhere throughout

<sup>1</sup> In the battle of Aquæ Sextiæ, fought 102 B.C.

Italy. The Latins comprised the inhabitants of the Latin colonies (sect. 48). The Italian allies were those conquered peoples that Rome had excluded wholly from the rights of the city.

The Social or Marsic War (as it is often called on account of the prominent part taken in the insurrection by the warlike Marsians) was a struggle that arose from the demands of the Italian allies for the rights and privileges of Roman citizenship.<sup>1</sup> Their demands being stubbornly resisted by both the aristocratic and the popular party at Rome,<sup>2</sup> they took up arms, resolved upon the establishment of a rival state. A town called Corfinium, among the Apennines, was chosen as the capital of the new republic, and its name changed to

Italica. Thus in a single day a large part of Italy south of the Rubicon was lost to Rome.

The greatness of the danger aroused all the old Roman courage and patriotism. Aristocrats and democrats hushed their quarrels and fought bravely side by side for the endangered life of the Republic. The war lasted three years, and was finally brought to an end rather by prudent concessions on the part of Rome than by fighting. In the year 90 B.C., alarmed

by signs of disaffection in certain of the communities that up to this time had remained faithful, Rome granted the franchise of the city to all Italian communities that had not declared war against her or that had already laid down their arms. The following year the full rights of the city were offered to all Italians who should within two months appear before a Roman magistrate and express a wish for the franchise. This tardy concession to the just demands of the Italians virtually ended the war.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It should be carefully noted that the opposition to the admission of strangers to the rights of the city was no longer based on religious grounds, as was the case in the days of patrician Rome (sect. 44). The opposition now arose simply from the selfish desire of a privileged class in the Roman state to retain its monopoly rights.

<sup>2</sup> The Italians found one open-minded and generous champion in a nobleman named Marcus Livius Drusus; but by his espousal of their cause Drusus made bitter enemies at Rome and he was assassinated.

<sup>3</sup> After the close of the war the rights that had up to this time been enjoyed by the Latin towns were conferred upon all the cities between the Po and the Alps.



FIG. 15. COIN OF  
THE ITALIAN CON-  
FEDERACY

The Sabellian bull goring  
the Roman wolf

**93. Comments on the Political Results of the Social War.** Thus as an outcome of the war practically all the freemen of Italy south of the Po were made equal in civil and political rights. This was a matter of great significance. "The enrollment of the Italians among her own citizens deserves to be regarded," declares the historian Merivale, "as the greatest stroke of policy in the whole history of the Republic." This wholesale enfranchisement of Latin and Italian allies more than doubled the number of Roman citizens.<sup>1</sup>

This equalization of the different classes of the Italian peninsula was simply a later phase of that movement in early Rome which resulted in the equalization of the two orders of the patricians and plebeians (Chapter III). But the purely political results of the earlier and those of the later revolution were very different. At the earlier time those who demanded and received the franchise were persons living either in Rome or in its immediate vicinity, and consequently able to exercise the acquired right to vote and to hold office.

But now it was very different. These new-made citizens were living in towns and villages or on farms scattered all over Italy, and of course very few of them could ever go to Rome, either to participate in the elections there, to vote on proposed legislation, or to become candidates for the Roman magistracies. Hence the rights they had acquired were, after all, politically barren. But no one was to blame for this state of things. Rome had simply outgrown her city constitution and her system of primary assemblies (sect. 12). She needed for her widening empire a representative system like ours; but representation was a political device far away from the practice if not from the thoughts of the men of those times.

As a result of the impossibility of the Roman citizens outside of Rome taking part, as a general thing, in the meetings of the popular assemblies at the capital, the offices of the state fell into the hands of those actually living in Rome or settled in its immediate neighborhood. Since the free, or virtually free, distribution of corn and the public shows were drawing to the capital from all quarters crowds of the poor, the idle, and the vicious, these assemblies were rapidly

<sup>1</sup> The census for the year 70 B.C. gives the number of citizens as 900,000, as against 394,336 about a generation before the war.

becoming simply mobs controlled by noisy demagogues and unscrupulous military leaders aiming at the supreme power in the state.

This situation brought about a serious division in the body of Roman citizens. Those of the capital came to regard themselves as the real rulers of the state, as they actually were, and looked with disdain upon those living in the other cities and the remoter districts of the peninsula. They alone reaped the fruits of the conquered world. At the same time the mass of outside passive citizens, as we may call them, came to look with jealousy upon this body of pampered aristocrats, rich speculators, and ragged, dissolute clients and hangers-on at Rome. They became quite reconciled to the thought of power passing out of the hands of such a crowd and into the hands of a single man. The feelings of men everywhere were being prepared for the revolution that was to overthrow the Republic and bring in the Empire.

**94. Condition of Things in the Province of Asia.** While the Social War was still in progress in Italy a formidable enemy of Rome appeared in the East. Mithradates VI, surnamed the Great, king of Pontus,<sup>1</sup> taking advantage of the distracted state of the Republic, had practically destroyed the Roman power throughout the Orient and made himself master of Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece. In order to render intelligible this amazing and swift revolution in the affairs of the East, we must here give a short account of the condition of things in that part of the Mediterranean world before the appearance upon the stage of Mithradates.

We have already seen how Rome extended her authority over Macedonia and Greece (sects. 74, 75). Soon after the establishment of her rule in these lands, it was vastly extended in Asia by "one of the surprises of history — the extinction of a rich and powerful monarchy by suicide." In the year 133 B.C. King Attalus III of Pergamum (sect. 73) died, having willed his kingdom to the Roman people.<sup>2</sup> The Romans accepted the bequest, and made the territory into a province under the name of *Asia*.

<sup>1</sup> See map after p. 90.

<sup>2</sup> There were during this period several of these surprises: 96 B.C. Cyrene was bequeathed by its last ruler to the Roman Republic; and 75 B.C. the last king of Bithynia likewise willed his kingdom to Rome.

This province of Asia embraced probably the richest region, as it was certainly one of the oldest in its civilization, that Rome had thus far acquired. The Greek cities of the country had traditions reaching back into prehistoric times. Their tribute had swollen the fabulous wealth of the Lydian Crœsus. This exceptional prosperity of the earlier time had now indeed passed away, but the wealth and trade of the region were still great and important, so that the province presented an attractive field for the operations of Italian traders, speculators, and money lenders. The country became crowded with these immigrant classes, who plundered the natives,<sup>1</sup> and carried their ill-gotten booty to Rome to spend it there in gross and ostentatious living.

The Roman magistrates of the province were, as a rule, men who were willing to accept a share of the plunder in return for connivance at the wickedness going on all around them. Of course there were among the Italian residents many honorable merchants; but the dishonesty, extortion, and cruelty of the majority were so odious and so galling that they all alike became the objects of the utmost hatred and detestation of the natives. Bearing in mind this feeling of the natives towards the Italians, we shall understand how it was possible for Mithradates to effect such an overturning of things so quickly as he did.

**95. Mithradates Creates an Empire in the East.** Mithradates had come to the throne of the little kingdom of Pontus in the year 120 B.C. His extraordinary career impressed deeply the imagination of his times, and his deeds and fame have come down to us disguised and distorted by legend. His bodily frame and strength were immense, and his activity untiring. He could carry on conversation, it is said, in twenty-two of the different languages of his subjects. He was familiar with the science and letters of Greece. His court, crowded with Greek artists and scholars, was one of the great radiating centers of Greek influence in the Hellenistic Age. In no other

<sup>1</sup> This plundering went on largely in connection with the collection of the taxes and public rents. The natives paid a tenth in kind of the produce of the tilled land, and a rent for the use of the public pastures. There were also custom duties on imports. Under a law of Gaius Gracchus, the collection of these rents or taxes was farmed out, the censors every five years selling the privileges at public auction.

country of Asia was there a more perfect blending of Persian and Greek civilizations. In truth, Mithradates was "the heir of Darius and Alexander." He carried on in regions which the Macedonian conquests had not reached, the work of Alexander and his successors. He founded new Greek cities and encouraged marriages between the natives and Greeks. But Mithradates, notwithstanding the fact of his half Greek descent, — his mother was a Syrian Greek, — was in his deepest instincts and impulses a typical oriental barbarian.

In the course of a few years Mithradates pushed out the boundaries of his little hereditary kingdom until it almost encircled the Euxine, which became in effect a Pontic sea. He now audaciously encroached upon the Roman possessions in Asia Minor. The natives of the Roman province of Asia, oppressed by Roman speculators, tax farmers, usurers, and corrupt magistrates, hailed him as their deliverer.



FIG. 16. MITHRADATES  
THE GREAT. (Coin)

In order to make secure his power in Asia, Mithradates now gave orders that on a certain day every Italian, without distinction of age or sex, should be put to death. This savage order was almost everywhere carried out to the letter. Men, women, and children, all of the Italian name, were massacred. The number of victims of the wholesale slaughter is variously estimated at from seventy thousand to one hundred and fifty thousand.

Mithradates now turned his attention to Europe and sent his army into Greece. Athens, hoping for the revival of her old empire, and the most of the other Greek cities, renounced the authority of Rome and hailed Mithradates as the protector of Hellenism against the barbarian Romans. Thus in the space of a few months was the power of the Romans destroyed throughout the East, and the boundaries of their empire pushed back virtually to the Adriatic.

**96. Marius and Sulla Contend for the Command in the War against Mithradates.** The Roman Senate now bestirred itself. An army was raised for the recovery of the Orient. Straightway a contest arose between Marius and Sulla for the command of the forces. The



Senate conferred this upon Sulla, who at that time was consul. But by violent means an unconstitutional measure<sup>1</sup> was carried in an assembly of the people whereby the command was taken away from Sulla and given to Marius. Sulla now saw that the sword must settle the dispute. At the head of his legions he marched upon Rome and entered the gates, and "for the first time in the annals of the city a Roman army encamped within the walls." The party of Marius was defeated, and he and ten of his companions were proscribed. Sulla soon embarked with the legions to meet Mithradates in the East (88 B.C.).

**97. Marius Massacres the Aristocrats (87 B.C.).** Leaving Sulla to carry on the Mithradatic war,<sup>2</sup> we must first follow the fortunes of the proscribed Marius. Returning from Africa, whither he had fled,<sup>3</sup> Marius joined the consul Cinna in an attempt to crush by force the senatorial party. Rome was cut off from her food supplies and starved into submission.

Marius now took a terrible revenge upon his enemies. The consul Gnæus Octavius, who represented the aristocrats, was assassinated, and his head set up in front of the Rostra. Never before had such a thing been seen at Rome—a consul's head exposed to the public gaze. For five days and nights a merciless slaughter was kept up. The life of every man in the capital was in the hands of the revengeful Marius. As a fitting sequel to all this violence, Marius and Cinna were, in an entirely illegal way, declared consuls. Marius was now consul for the seventh time. He enjoyed his seventh consulship only thirteen days, being carried away by death in the seventy-first year of his age (86 B.C.).



FIG. 17. MARIUS (?) (Uffizi Gallery, Florence)

<sup>1</sup> The measure was a provision of the Sulpician Laws (88 B.C.), so called from their proposer, the tribune Sulpicius, who, from fear of the designs of Sulla, had entered into an understanding with Marius.

<sup>2</sup> This was what is known as the First Mithradatic War (88–84 B.C.).

<sup>3</sup> For the wanderings of Marius, see Plutarch, *Gaius Marius*, xxxv–xli.

**98. The Proscriptions of Sulla (82 B.C.).** With the Mithradatic war ended, Sulla wrote to the Senate, saying that he was now coming to take vengeance upon the Marian party — his own and the Republic's enemies. The terror and consternation created at Rome by this letter were increased by the accidental burning of the Capitol. The Sibylline Books, which held the secrets of the fate of Rome, were consumed. This accident awakened the most gloomy apprehensions. Such an event, it was believed, could only foreshadow the most direful calamities to the state.

The returning army from the East landed in Italy (83 B.C.). After much hard fighting<sup>1</sup> Sulla entered Rome with all the powers of a dictator. The leaders of the Marian party were proscribed, rewards were offered for their heads, and their property was confiscated. Sulla was implored to make out a list of those he designed to put to death, that those he intended to spare might be relieved of the terrible suspense in which all were now held. He made out a list of eighty, which was attached to the Rostra. The people murmured at the length of the roll. In a few days it was extended to over three hundred, and then grew rapidly until it included the names of thousands of the best citizens of Italy. Hundreds were murdered simply because some favorites of Sulla coveted their estates. A wealthy noble, coming into the Forum and reading his own name in the list of the proscribed, exclaimed, "Alas! my villa has proved my ruin." Julius Cæsar, at this time a mere boy of eighteen, was proscribed on account of his relationship to Marius, but, upon the intercession of friends, Sulla spared him; as he did so, however, he said warningly, "There is in that boy many a Marius."

The number of victims of these proscriptions has been handed down as forty-seven hundred. Almost all of these must have been men of wealth or of special distinction on account of their activity in public affairs. The property of the proscribed was confiscated and sold at public auction, or virtually given away by Sulla to his favorites. The foundations of some of the colossal fortunes that we hear of a little after this were laid during these times of proscription and robbery.

<sup>1</sup> The fighting was especially marked by a terrible battle before the Colline Gate of the capital.

This reign of terror bequeathed to later times a terrible "legacy of hatred and fear." Its awful scenes haunted the Romans for generations, and at every crisis in the affairs of the commonwealth the public mind was thrown into a state of painful apprehension lest there should be a repetition of these frightful days of Sulla.

**99. Sulla made Dictator, with Power to Remodel the Constitution (82 B.C.).** The Senate now passed a decree which approved and confirmed all that Sulla had done, and made him dictator during his own good pleasure. This was the first time a dictator had been appointed since the war with Hannibal, and the first time the dictatorial authority had ever been conferred for a longer period than six months. The decree further invested Sulla with authority to make laws and to remodel the constitution in any way that might seem to him necessary and best. The power here given Sulla was like that with which the decemvirs had been clothed nearly four centuries before this time (sect. 33).

The reforms of Sulla had for their chief aim the restoration of the authority of the Senate, which recent revolutions had reduced almost to a nullity, and the lessening of the power of the tribunate and of the assembly of the plebs.

**100. The Death of Sulla ; Result of his Rule.** After having exercised the unlimited power of his office for three years, Sulla, to the surprise of everybody, suddenly resigned the dictatorship and went into retirement. He died the year following his abdication (78 B.C.). One important result of the reign of Sulla as an absolute dictator was the accustoming of the people to the idea of the rule of a single man. His short dictatorship was the prelude to the reign of the permanent emperor.

The parts of the old actors in the drama were now all played to the end. But the plot deepens, and new men appear upon the stage to carry on the new, which are really the old, parts.

**101. Spartacus ; War of the Gladiators (73-71 B.C.).** About a decade after the proscriptions of Sulla, Italy was the scene of fresh troubles. Gladiatorial combats had become at this time the favorite sport of the amphitheater. At Capua was a sort of training-school from which skilled fighters were hired out for public or private

entertainments. In this seminary was a Thracian slave, known by the name of Spartacus, who incited his companions to revolt. The insurgents fled to the crater of Vesuvius and made that their stronghold. There they were joined by gladiators from other schools, and by slaves and discontented persons from every quarter. Their number at length increased to one hundred and fifty thousand men. For three years they defied the power of Rome, and even gained control of the larger part of southern Italy. But at length Spartacus himself was killed and the insurrection suppressed.<sup>1</sup>

**102. The Abuses and the Prosecution of Verres (70 B.C.).** Terrible as was the state of society in Italy, still worse was the condition of affairs outside the peninsula. At first the rule of the Roman governors in the provinces, though severe, was honest and prudent. But during the period of profligacy and corruption upon which we have now entered, the administration of these foreign possessions had become shamefully dishonest and incredibly cruel and rapacious. The prosecution of Verres, the proprætor of Sicily, exposed the scandalous rule of the oligarchy, into whose hands the government had fallen. For three years Verres plundered and ravaged that island with impunity. He sold all the offices and all his decisions as judge. He demanded of the farmers the greater part of their crops, which he sold to swell his already enormous fortune. Agriculture was thus ruined and the farms were abandoned. Verres had a taste for art, and when on his tours through the island confiscated gems, vases, statues, paintings, and other things which struck his fancy, whether in temples or in private dwellings.

Verres could not be called to account while in office (sect. 28), and it was doubtful whether, after the end of his term, he could be convicted, so venal had become the Senate, the body by which all such offenders were tried. Indeed, Verres himself openly boasted that he intended two thirds of his gains for his judges and lawyers; the remaining one third would satisfy himself.

At length, after Sicily had come to look as though it had been ravaged by barbarian conquerors, the infamous robber was impeached.

<sup>1</sup> The defeat of the gladiators was mainly the work of the general Marcus Licinius Crassus (see sect. 107).

The prosecutor was Marcus Tullius Cicero, the brilliant orator, who was at this time just rising into prominence at Rome. The storm of indignation raised by the developments of the trial caused Verres to flee into exile to Massilia, whither he took with him much of his ill-gotten wealth.

**103. Growth of Piracy in the Mediterranean ; War with the Pirates (78-66 B.C.).** Another most shameful commentary on the utter incapacity of the government of the aristocrats was the growth of piracy

in the Mediterranean waters during their rule.

It is true that this was an evil which had been growing for a long time.

The Romans through their conquest of the

countries fringing the Mediterranean had destroyed not only the

governments that had maintained order on the land but at the same

time, as in the case of Carthage, had destroyed the fleets which, since the

days when the rising Greek cities suppressed piracy in the Ægean

Sea, had policed the Mediterranean and kept its ship routes clear of corsairs.

In the more vigorous days of the Republic the sea had been well watched by Roman fleets, but after the close of the wars with

Carthage the Romans had allowed their war navy to fall into decay.

The Mediterranean, thus left practically without patrol, was swarming

with pirates ; for Roman oppression in Africa, Spain, and especially in Greece and Asia Minor, had caused thousands of adventurous

spirits in those maritime countries to take to their ships and seek a livelihood by preying upon the commerce of the seas. The cruelty and

extortion of the Roman governors in the various provinces, the civil war, the proscriptions and confiscations of the days of terror at Rome,



FIG. 18. ROMAN TRADING VESSEL

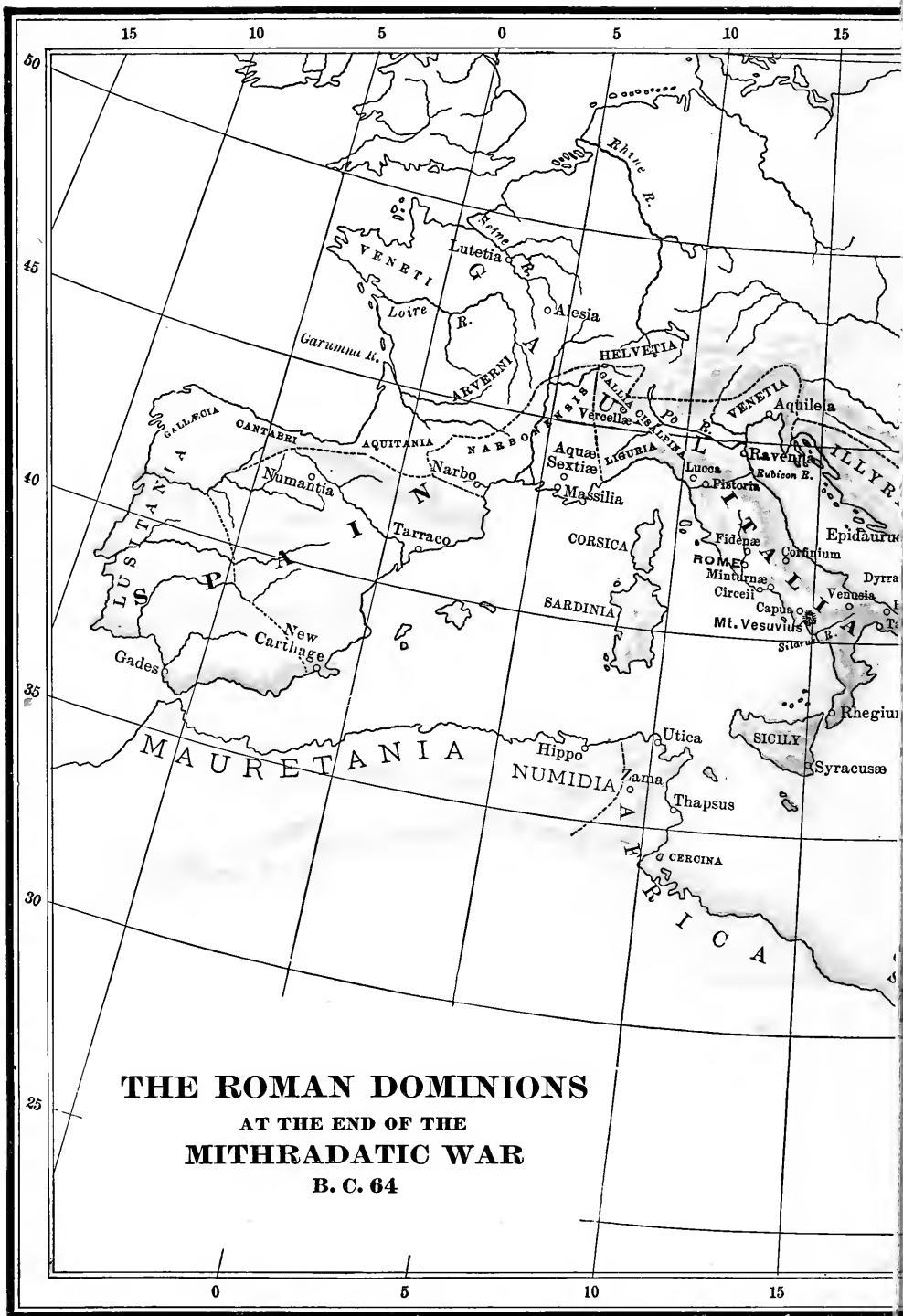
the impoverishment and dispossession of the peasant farmers everywhere through the growth of great slave estates — all these things, filling as they did the Mediterranean lands with homeless and desperate men, had also driven large numbers of hitherto honest and industrious persons to the same course of life. "They harvested the sea instead of the land."

These "ruined men of all nations," now turned pirates, had banded themselves together in a sort of government and state. They had as places of refuge numerous strong fortresses — four hundred it is said — among the inaccessible mountains of the coast lands they frequented. They had a fleet of a thousand sail, with dockyards and naval arsenals. They made treaties with the Greek maritime cities and formed leagues of friendship with the kings and princes of the East.

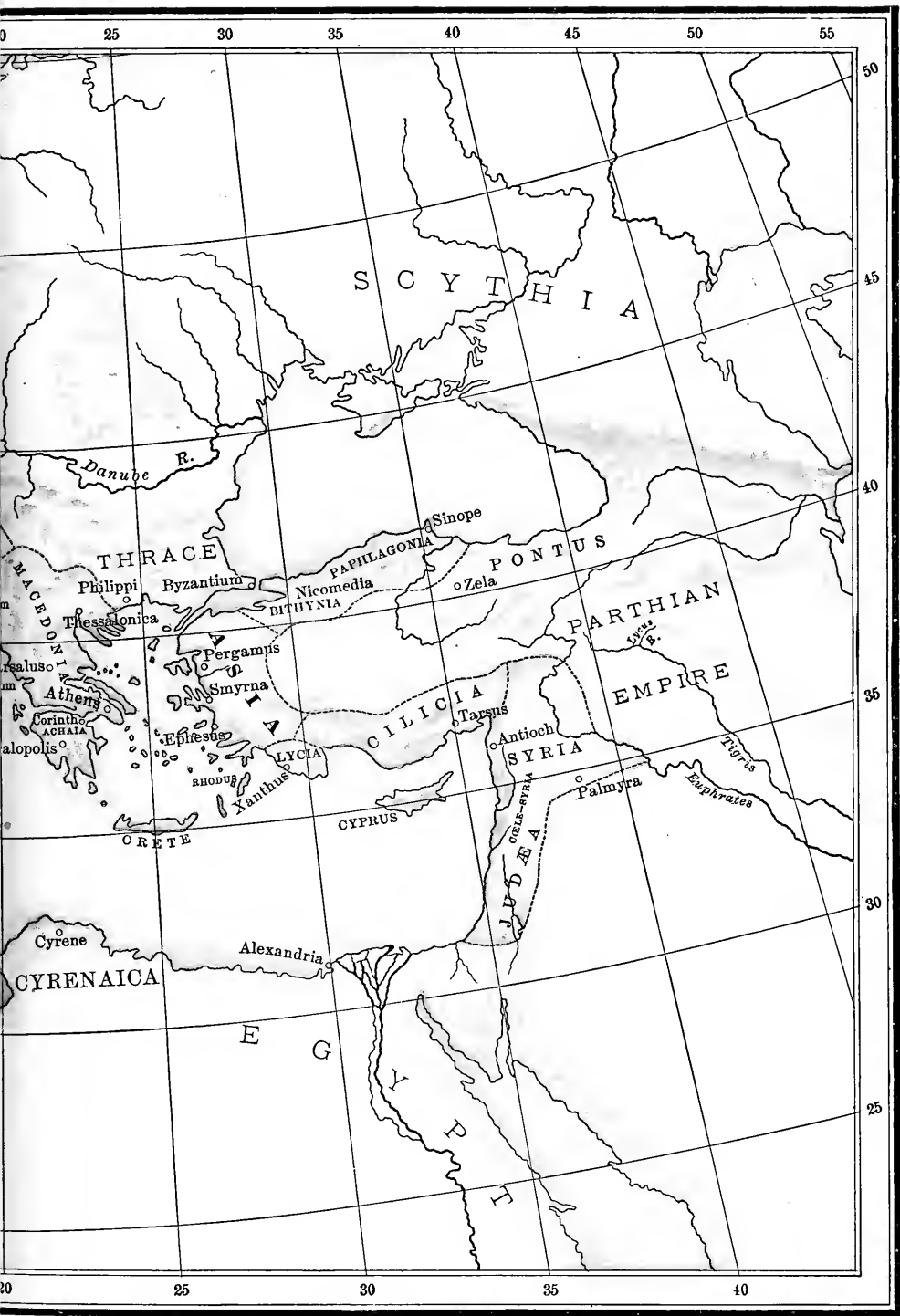
Swift ships, sailing in fleets and squadrons, scoured the waters of the Mediterranean, so that no merchantman could spread her sails in safety. Nor were these buccaneers content with what spoils the sea might yield them; like the Vikings of the Northern seas in later times, they made descents upon every coast, plundered villas and towns, and sweeping off the inhabitants sold them openly as slaves in the slave markets of the East. In some regions the inhabitants, as in early times, were compelled to remove for safety from the coast and rebuild their homes farther inland. The pirates even ravaged the shores of Italy itself. They carried off merchants and travelers from the Appian Way and held them for ransom. At last they began to intercept the grain ships of Sicily and Africa and thereby threatened Rome with starvation. Corn rose to famine prices.

The Romans now bestirred themselves. In the year 67 B.C. Gnæus Pompey, a rising young general, upon whom the title of "Great" had already been conferred, was invested with dictatorial power for three years over the Mediterranean and all its coasts for fifty miles inland. He quickly swept the pirates from the sea, captured their strongholds in Cilicia, and settled in colonies, chiefly in Cilicia and Greece, the twenty thousand prisoners that fell into his hands. His vigorous and successful conduct of this campaign against the pirates gained him great honor and reputation.











**104. Pompey in the East; the Death of Mithradates.** Pompey had not yet ended the war with the pirates before he was given, by a vote of the people, charge of the war against Mithradates,<sup>1</sup> who now for several years had been in arms against Rome. In a great battle in Lesser Armenia Pompey almost annihilated the army of Mithradates. The king fled from the field, and soon afterwards, to avoid falling into the hands of the Romans, took his own life<sup>2</sup> (63 B.C.). His death removed one of the most formidable enemies that Rome had ever encountered. Hamilcar, Hannibal, and Mithradates were the three great names that the Romans always pronounced with respect and dread.

Pompey now turned south and conquered Syria, Phœnicia, and Cœle-Syria, which countries he erected into a Roman province under the name of Syria (64 B.C.). Still pushing southward, the conqueror entered Palestine, and after a short siege of Jerusalem, by taking advantage of the scruples of the Jews in regard to fighting on the Sabbath day, captured the city (63 B.C.). In spite of the protestations of the priests, Pompey insisted upon entering the innermost shrine of the temple there. He was astonished to find the chamber vacant, without even a picture or a statue of the god to whom the temple was dedicated. Seemingly awed by his surroundings, he left untouched the treasures of the God of the Bible. "Alone of all the gods of the Orient his gold was respected by a Roman adventurer" (Ferrero).

In the conquest of Palestine the Romans brought within the boundaries of their widening empire one of the least of all the lands they had subjected, yet one destined to exert a profound influence upon its destinies.



FIG. 19. POMPEY THE GREAT  
(Spada Palace, Rome)

<sup>1</sup> The so-called Third Mithradatic War (74–64 B.C.). What is known as the Second Mithradatic War (83–82 B.C.) was a short conflict that arose just after the close of the First (p. 85, n. 2). The chief conduct of the present war had been in the hands of Lucius Licinius Lucullus.

<sup>2</sup> Some authorities, however, say that he was murdered by his son.

**105. Pompey's Triumph.** After regulating the affairs of the different states and provinces in the East, and founding a great number of cities, Pompey set out on his return to Rome, where, dressed in the manner of Alexander the Great, he celebrated such a triumph as never before had been seen since Rome became a city. The spoils of all the East were borne in the procession; three hundred and twenty-two princes walked as captives before the triumphal chariot of the conqueror; legends upon the banners proclaimed that he had conquered twenty-one kings, captured one thousand strongholds, nine hundred towns, and eight hundred ships, and subjugated more than twelve millions of people; and that he had put into the treasury twenty thousand talents,<sup>1</sup> besides doubling the regular revenues of the state. He boasted that three times he had triumphed, and each time for the conquest of a continent — first for Africa, then for Europe, and now for Asia, which completed the conquest of the world.

**106. The Conspiracy of Catiline (64-62 B.C.).** While the legions were absent from Italy with Pompey in the East a most daring conspiracy against the government was formed at Rome. Lucius Sergius Catilina, a ruined spendthrift, had gathered a large company of profligate young nobles, weighed down with debts and desperate like himself, and had deliberately planned to murder the consuls and the chief men of the state and to plunder and burn the capital. The offices of the new government were to be divided among the conspirators. The proscriptions of Sulla were to be renewed and all debts were to be canceled.

Fortunately, all the plans of the conspirators were revealed to the consul Cicero, the great orator. The Senate immediately clothed the consuls with dictatorial power with the usual formula that "they should take care that the Republic received no harm." The city walls were manned; and at every point the capital and state were armed against the "invisible foe." Then in the senate chamber, with Catiline himself present, Cicero exposed the whole conspiracy in a famous Philippic, known as the *First Oration against Catiline*. The senators shrank from the conspirator and left the seats about him empty. After a feeble effort to reply to Cicero, overwhelmed by a

<sup>1</sup> About \$25,000,000.

sense of his guilt, and the cries of "traitor" and "parricide" from the senators, Catiline fled from the chamber and hurried out of the city to the camp of his followers in Etruria. In a desperate battle fought near Pistoria he was slain with many of his followers (62 B.C.). His head was borne as a trophy to Rome. Cicero was hailed as the "Savior of his Country."

**107. Cæsar, Crassus, and Pompey: the So-called "First Triumvirate" (60 B.C.).** Although the conspiracy of Catiline had failed, still it was very easy to foresee that the downfall of the Roman Republic was near at hand. Indeed, from this time on, only the name remained. The days of liberty at Rome were over. From this time forward the government was practically in the hands of ambitious and popular leaders, or of corrupt combinations and "rings." Events gather about a few great names, and the annals of the Republic become biographical rather than historical.

There were now in the state three men — Cæsar, Crassus, and Pompey — who were destined to shape affairs. Gaius Julius Cæsar was born in the year 100 B.C. Although descended from an old patrician family, still he had identified himself with the Marian or democratic party. In every way he courted public favor. He lavished enormous sums upon public games and tables. His popularity was unbounded. A successful campaign in Spain had already made known to himself, as well as to others, his genius as a commander.

Marcus Licinius Crassus belonged to the senatorial or aristocratic party. He owed his influence to his enormous wealth, being one of the richest men in the Roman world. His property was estimated at seventy-one hundred talents.<sup>1</sup>

With Gnæus Pompey and his achievements we are already familiar. His influence throughout the Roman world was great; for in settling and reorganizing the many countries he subdued he had always taken care to reconstruct them in his own interest, as well as in that of the Republic. The offices were filled with his friends and adherents. This patronage had secured for him incalculable authority in the provinces. His veteran legionaries, too, were naturally devoted to the general who had led them so often to victory.

<sup>1</sup> About \$9,000,000.

What is commonly known as the "First Triumvirate"<sup>1</sup> rested on the genius of Cæsar, the wealth of Crassus, and the achievements of Pompey. It was a private arrangement entered into by these three men for the purpose of securing to themselves the control of public affairs. Each pledged himself to work for the interests of the others. Cæsar was the manager of the "ring." Through the aid of his colleagues he secured the consulship. "Dark was the issue which destiny was reserving for each of the three" (Ferrero).

**108. Cæsar's Conquest of Gaul (58-51 B.C.).** At the end of his consulship Cæsar secured for himself, as proconsul, the administration of the provinces of Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul, together with Illyricum. Beyond the Alps the Gallic and Germanic tribes were in restless movement. Cæsar saw there a grand field for military exploits, which might gain for him such glory and prestige as in other fields had been won and were now enjoyed by Pompey. With this achieved, and with a veteran army devoted to his interests, he might hope easily to attain that position at the head of affairs towards which his ambition was urging him.

In the spring of 58 B.C. alarming intelligence from beyond the Alps caused Cæsar to hasten from Rome into Transalpine Gaul. Now began a series of eight brilliant campaigns directed against the various tribes of Gaul, Germany, and Britain. In his admirable *Commentaries*, the best history written by a Roman, Cæsar himself has left us a faithful and graphic account of all the memorable marches, battles, and sieges that filled the years between 58 and 51 B.C.

The year 55 B.C. marked two notable achievements. Early in the spring of this year Cæsar constructed a bridge across the Rhine and led his legions against the Germans in their native woods and swamps. In the autumn of the same year he crossed, by means of hastily constructed ships, the channel that separates the mainland from Britain, and after maintaining a foothold upon that island for two weeks withdrew his legions into Gaul for the winter. The following season he

<sup>1</sup> This designation of this unofficial alliance is not strictly correct since the term *Triumvirate* is the title of a board of three regular magistrates and therefore should properly be applied only to the body mentioned in section 107 and commonly designated as the "Second Triumvirate." That body was established by a plebescitum which conferred upon the triumvirs dictatorial powers for five years.

made another invasion of Britain, but, after some encounters with the fierce barbarians, recrossed to the mainland without having established any permanent garrisons in the island. Almost one hundred years passed away before the natives of Britain were again molested by the Romans (sect. 130).

Great enthusiasm was aroused at Rome by Cæsar's victories over the Gauls. "Let the Alps sink," exclaimed Cicero; "the gods raised them to shelter Italy from the barbarians; they are now no longer needed."

**109. Results of the Gallic Wars.** The historian Ferrero pronounces Cæsar's conquest of Gaul to be "the most important fact in Roman history." One of the many important results of the conquest was the establishment throughout this region of the Roman Peace. Before the Romans entered the country it was divided among a great number of tribes that were constantly at war with one another. In throwing her authority over them all, Rome caused their intertribal contentions to cease, and thus established a condition of things that first made possible the rapid and steady development among the people of the arts of peace.

A second result of the Gallic wars of Cæsar was the Romanizing of Gaul. The country was opened to Roman traders and settlers, who carried with them the language, customs, and arts of Italy. Honors were conferred upon many of the Gallic chieftains, privileges were bestowed upon the different communities, and the Roman franchise was granted to prominent and influential natives.

This Romanization of Gaul meant much both for Roman history and for the general history of Europe. The Roman stock in Italy was failing. It was this new Romanized people that in the times of the Empire gave to the Roman state many of its best commanders, statesmen, emperors, orators, poets, and historians.

The Romanization of Gaul meant, further, the adding of another to the number of Latin nations that were to arise from the break-up of the Roman Empire. There can be little doubt that if Cæsar had not conquered Gaul it would have been overrun by the Germans, and would ultimately have become simply an extension of Germany. There would then have been no great Latin nation north of the Alps and the Pyrenees. It is difficult to imagine what European history

would be like if the French nation, with its semi-Italian temperament, instincts, and traditions, had never come into existence.

A final result of Cæsar's campaigns in Gaul and against the intruding German tribes was the check given to the migratory movements of these peoples. Had this check not been given, it is possible that what we call the Great Migration of the German peoples might have taken place in the first century before, instead of in the fifth century after, the coming of Christ, and Rome's great work of enriching civilization and establishing it everywhere throughout the Mediterranean world might have been interrupted while yet only fairly begun.

**110. The Death of Crassus ; Rivalry between Cæsar and Pompey.**

While Cæsar was engaged in his Transalpine wars, Crassus was leading an army against the Parthians, hoping to rival there the brilliant conquests of Cæsar in Gaul. But his army was almost annihilated by the enemy, and he himself was slain (54 B.C.).

The world now belonged to Cæsar and Pompey. That the insatiable ambition of these two rivals should sooner or later bring them into collision was inevitable. Their alliance in the "triumvirate" was simply one of selfish convenience, not of friendship. While Cæsar was carrying on his campaigns in Gaul, Pompey was at Rome watching jealously the growing reputation of his great rival. He strove by a princely liberality to win the affections of the common people. He gave magnificent games and set public tables, and when the interest of the people in the sports of the circus flagged he entertained them with gladiatorial combats.

In a similar manner Cæsar strengthened himself with the people for the struggle which he plainly foresaw. He sought in every way to ingratiate himself with the Gauls; he increased the pay of his soldiers, conferred the privileges of Roman citizenship upon the inhabitants of different cities, and sent to Rome enormous sums of gold to be expended in the erection of temples, theaters, and other public structures, and in the celebration of games and shows that should rival in magnificence those given by Pompey.

The Senate, favoring Pompey, made him sole consul for one year (52 B.C.), which was about the same thing as making him dictator, and



issued a decree that Cæsar should resign his office and disband his Gallic legions by a stated day. The crisis had now come. Cæsar ordered his legions to hasten from Gaul into Italy. Without waiting for their arrival, at the head of a small body of veterans that he had with him at Ravenna, he crossed the Rubicon, a little stream that marked the boundary of his province. This was a declaration of war. As he plunged into the river, he exclaimed, "The die is cast!"

**111. Cæsar becomes Master of the West (49-48 B.C.).** As Cæsar marched southward, one city after another threw open its gates to him; legion after legion went over to his standard. Pompey, with a few legions, fled to Greece. Within sixty days Cæsar had made himself master of all Italy. His moderation won all classes to his side. Many had looked to see the terrible scenes of the days of Marius and Sulla reënacted. Cæsar, however, soon gave assurance that life and property should be held sacred.

With order restored in Italy, and with Sicily, Sardinia, and Spain brought under his authority, Cæsar was free to turn his forces against Pompey in the East. The armies of the rivals met upon the plains of Pharsalus in Thessaly. Pompey's forces were cut to pieces. He himself fled from the field and escaped to Egypt. Just as he was landing he was assassinated.

**112. A Laconic Message; End of the Civil War.** Cæsar, who had followed Pompey to Egypt, was detained there nine months in settling a dispute respecting the throne. The kingdom was finally secured to the celebrated Cleopatra and a younger brother. Intelligence was now brought from Asia Minor that Pharnaces, son of Mithradates the Great, was inciting a revolt among the peoples of that region. Cæsar met the Pontic king at Zela, defeated him, and in five days put an end to the war (47 B.C.). His laconic message to a friend announcing his victory is famous. It ran thus: *Veni, vidi, vici*<sup>1</sup> ("I came, I saw, I conquered").

Cæsar now hurried back to Italy, and thence proceeded to Africa, which the friends of the old Republic had made their last chief rallying-place. At the great battle of Thapsus (46 B.C.) they were crushed. Fifty thousand lay dead upon the field. Cato,<sup>2</sup> who had

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *Cæsar*, l.

<sup>2</sup> This was a grandson of Cato the Censor (sect. 77).

been the very life and soul of the army, refusing to outlive the Republic which he had served, took his own life.

**113. Cæsar as Dictator; an Uncrowned King.** Cæsar was now virtually lord of the Roman world.<sup>1</sup> He refrained from taking the title of king, but he assumed the purple robe, the insignia of royalty, and, after the manner of sovereigns, caused his effigy to be stamped

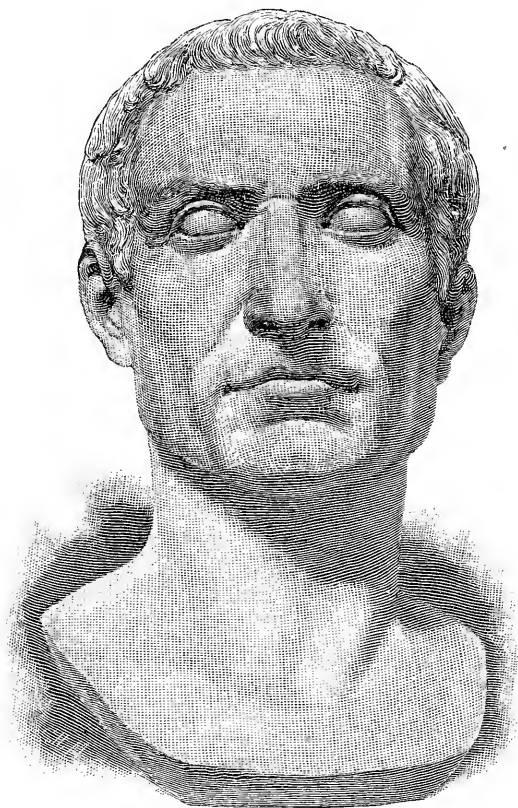


FIG. 20. JULIUS CÆSAR. (Vatican Museum)

on the public coins. His statue was significantly given a place along with those of the seven kings of early Rome. He was invested with all the offices and dignities of the state. The Senate made him perpetual dictator (44 B.C.), and conferred upon him the powers of censor, consul, and tribune, with the titles of Pontifex Maximus and Imperator. Thus, though not a king in name, Cæsar's actual position at the head of the state was that of an absolute ruler.

**114. Cæsar as a Statesman.** Cæsar had great plans which embraced the whole world that Rome had conquered. A chief aim of his was to establish between the different classes of the empire equality of rights, to place Italy and the provinces on the same footing, to blend the various races and peoples into a real nation—in a word, to carry to completion that great work of making all the world Roman which had been begun in the earliest times. To this end he

<sup>1</sup> The sons of Pompey—Gnæus and Sextus—had headed a revolt in Spain. Cæsar crushed the movement a little later in the decisive battle of Munda, 45 B.C.

established numerous colonies in the provinces and settled in them a hundred thousand of the poorer citizens of the capital. With a liberality that astonished and offended many, he admitted to the Senate sons of freedmen, and particularly representative men from among the Gauls, and conferred upon individual provincials and upon entire classes and communities in the provinces the partial or full rights of the city. His action here marks an epoch in the history of Rome. The immunities and privileges of the city had never hitherto been conferred, save in exceptional cases, upon any peoples other than those of the Italian race. Cæsar threw the gates of the city wide open to the non-Italian peoples of the provinces. Thus was foreshadowed the day when all freemen throughout the whole Empire should be Roman in name and privilege<sup>1</sup> (sect. 143).

In the administration of the provinces Cæsar introduced reforms which placed checks upon the robbery of the provincials by rapacious governors, tax farmers, and usurers. At Rome he corrected abuses in the corn doles by restricting the distribution to the really needy. This reform reduced the number of recipients of this public charity by more than one half.

As Pontifex Maximus, Cæsar reformed the calendar so as to bring the festivals once more in their proper seasons, and provided against further confusion by making the year consist of three hundred and sixty-five days, with an added day for every fourth or leap year. This is what is called the Julian Calendar.<sup>2</sup>

Besides these achievements, Cæsar projected many vast undertakings (among these a survey of the enormous domains of the state and the codification of the Roman laws) which the abrupt termination of his life prevented his carrying into execution.

<sup>1</sup> One of the most important of all Cæsar's laws was that known as the *Lex Julia Municipalis* (45 B.C.), whose aim was to bring order and uniformity into the municipal system and to develop a more vigorous civic life in the municipal towns of Italy. All the municipal governments organized after this, whether in towns in Italy or in the provinces, conformed to the principles embodied in this important constitutional measure.

<sup>2</sup> This calendar, which was based on the old Egyptian calendar, was in general use in Europe until the year 1582, when it was reformed by Pope Gregory XIII, and became what is known as the Gregorian Calendar. This in time came to be used in all Christian countries except those of the Greek Church (Russia, etc.), where the Julian Calendar is still followed.

**115. The Death of Cæsar (44 B. c.).** Cæsar had his bitter personal enemies, who never ceased to plot his downfall. There were, too, sincere lovers of the old Republic to whom he was the destroyer of republican liberties. The impression began to prevail that he was aiming to make himself king. A crown was several times offered him in public by the consul Mark Antony; but seeing the manifest displeasure of the people, he each time pushed it aside. Yet there is no doubt that secretly he desired it. It was reported that he proposed to rebuild the walls of Troy, the fabled cradle of the Roman race, and make that ancient capital the seat of the new Roman Empire. Others professed to believe that the arts and charms of the Egyptian Cleopatra, who had borne him a son at Rome, would entice him to make Alexandria the center of the proposed kingdom. Thus many, out of love for Rome and the old Republic, were led to enter into a conspiracy against the life of Cæsar with those who sought to rid themselves of the dictator for other and personal reasons.

The Ides (the fifteenth day) of March, 44 B. c., upon which day the Senate convened, witnessed the assassination. Seventy or eighty conspirators, headed by Gaius Cassius and Marcus Brutus, were concerned in the plot. The soothsayers must have had some knowledge of the plans of the conspirators, for they had warned Cæsar to "beware of the Ides of March." As he entered the hall where the Senate was to assemble that day, he observed the astrologer Spurinna and remarked carelessly to him, referring to his prediction, "The Ides of March have come." "Yes," replied Spurinna, "but not gone."

No sooner had Cæsar taken his seat than the conspirators crowded about him as if to present a petition. Upon a signal from one of their number their daggers were drawn. For a moment Cæsar defended himself; but seeing Brutus, upon whom he had lavished gifts and favors, among the conspirators, he is said to have exclaimed reproachfully, "*Et tu, Brute!*" — "Thou, too, Brutus!" then to have drawn his mantle over his face and to have received unresistingly their further thrusts.

The Romans had killed many of their best men and cut short their work; but never had they killed such a man as Cæsar. He was the greatest man their race had yet produced or was ever to produce.

Cæsar's work was left all incomplete. What lends to it such great historical importance is the fact that by his reforms and policies Cæsar drew the broad lines which his successors followed, and indicated the principles on which the government of the future must be based.

### 116. The Second Triumvirate (43 B.C.).

Antony, the friend and secretary of Cæsar, had gained possession of his will and papers, and now, under color of carrying out the testament of the dictator, according to a decree of the Senate, entered upon a course of high-handed usurpation. He was aided in his designs by Marcus Æmilius Lepidus, one of Cæsar's old lieutenants. Very soon he was exercising all the powers of a real dictator. "The tyrant is dead," said Cicero, "but the tyranny still lives."



FIG. 21. OCTAVIAN (OCTAVIUS) AS A YOUTH  
(Vatican Museum)

To what lengths Antony would have gone in his career of usurpation it is difficult to say, had he not been opposed at this point by Gaius Octavian (Octavius), the young grand-nephew of Julius Cæsar, and the one whom he had named in his will as his heir and adopted as his son. Civil war at once ensued. After a few months' hostilities,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The "War of Mutina" (44-43 B.C.), so called for the reason that the fighting took place around Mutina (now Modena) in northern Italy.

a common fear of the growing strength in the East of the murderers of Cæsar, led Octavian, Antony, and Lepidus to resolve to put aside their rivalry and unite their forces against them. The outcome of a conference was an alliance, — sanctioned by the assembly of the plebs, — known as the Second Triumvirate<sup>1</sup> (43 B.C.).

The plans of the triumvirs were infamous. A general proscription, such as had marked the coming to power of Sulla, was resolved upon.



FIG. 22. CICERO. (Madrid)

It was agreed that each should give up to the assassin such friends of his as had incurred the ill-will of either of the other triumvirs. Under this arrangement Octavian gave up his friend Cicero — who had incurred the hatred of Antony by opposing his schemes — and allowed his name to be put at the head of the list of the proscribed.

The friends of the orator urged him to flee the country. "Let me die," said he, "in my fatherland, which I have so often saved!" His attendants were hurrying him, half unwilling, towards the coast, when his pursuers came up and dispatched him in the litter in which he was being carried. His head was taken to Rome and set up in front of the Rostra, "from which he had so

often addressed the people with his eloquent appeals for liberty." It is told that Fulvia, the wife of Antony, ran her gold bodkin through the tongue in revenge for the bitter Philippics it had uttered against her husband. The right hand of the victim — the hand that had penned the eloquent orations — was nailed to the Rostra.

Cicero was but one victim among many hundreds. All the dreadful scenes of the days of Sulla were reënacted. Two thousand knights

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 94, n. 1.

and between two and three hundred senators were murdered. The estates of the wealthy were confiscated and sold at public auction.

**117. Last Struggle of the Republic at Philippi (42 B.C.): the Roman World in the Hands of Antony and Octavian.** The friends of the old Republic and the enemies of the triumvirs were meanwhile rallying in the East. Brutus and Cassius were the animating spirits. Octavian and Antony, as soon as they had disposed of their enemies in Italy, crossed the Adriatic into Greece to disperse the forces of the republicans there.

At Philippi, in Thrace, the hostile armies met (42 B.C.). In two successive engagements the new levies of the liberators were cut to pieces, and both Brutus and Cassius, believing the cause of the Republic forever lost, committed suicide. It was, indeed, the last effort of the Republic. The history of the events that lie between the action at Philippi and the establishment of the Empire is simply a record of the struggles among the triumvirs for the possession of the prize of supreme power. After various redistributions of provinces, Lepidus was at length expelled from the triumvirate, and then the Roman world was again, as in the times of Cæsar and Pompey, in the hands of two masters — Antony in the East and Octavian in the West.

**118. Antony and Cleopatra.** After the battle of Philippi Antony went into Asia for the purpose of settling the affairs of the provinces and vassal states there. At Tarsus, in Cilicia, he met Cleopatra, the famous queen of Egypt. Antony was completely fascinated, as had been the great Cæsar before him, by the witchery of the "Serpent of the Nile." Enslaved by her enchantments and charmed by her brilliant wit, in the pleasure of her company he forgot all else — ambition and honor and country.

**119. The Battle of Actium (31 B.C.).** Affairs could not long continue in their present course. Antony had put away his faithful wife Octavia, sister of Octavian, for the beautiful Cleopatra. It was whispered at Rome, and not without truth, that he proposed to make Alexandria the capital of the Roman world, and announce Cæsarion, son of Julius Cæsar and Cleopatra, as the heir of the Empire. All Rome was stirred. It was evident that a struggle was at hand in

which the question for decision would be whether the West should rule the East, or the East rule the West. All eyes were instinctively turned to Octavian as the defender of Italy and the supporter of the sovereignty of the Eternal City.

Both parties made the most gigantic preparations for the inevitable conflict. Octavian met the combined fleets of Antony and Cleopatra just off the promontory of Actium, on the western coast of Greece. While the issue of the battle that there took place was yet undecided, Cleopatra turned her galley in flight. The Egyptian ships, to the number of fifty, followed her example. Antony, as soon as he perceived the withdrawal of Cleopatra, forgot all else and followed in her track with a swift galley. Overtaking the fleeing queen, the infatuated man was received aboard her vessel and became her partner in the disgraceful flight.

The abandoned fleet, still fighting bravely, was destroyed, and the army surrendered to Octavian. The conqueror was now sole master of the civilized world. From this decisive battle (31 B.C.) are usually dated the end of the Republic and the beginning of the Empire. Some historians, however, make the establishment of the Empire date from the year 27 B.C., as it was not until then that Octavian was formally invested with imperial powers.

**120. Death of Antony and of Cleopatra ; Egypt becomes a Roman Province.** Octavian pursued Antony to Egypt, where the latter, deserted by his army and informed by a messenger from the false queen that she was dead, committed suicide.

Cleopatra then sought to enslave Octavian with her charms ; but failing in this, and becoming convinced that he proposed to take her to Rome that she might there grace his triumph, she took her own life, being in the thirty-eighth year of her age. With the death of Cleopatra the noted dynasty of the Ptolemies came to an end. Egypt was henceforth a province of the Roman state.

**Selections from the Sources.** PLUTARCH, *Tiberius Gracchus* and *Julius Cæsar*. APPIAN, *The Civil Wars*, bk. ii, chap. xviii (the panic in Rome after Cæsar's death). CICERO, *Letters to Atticus* (Loeb Classical Library), bk. vii, letters 1-26. Munro's *Source Book*, pp. 100-141, 217-220 ; Davis's *Readings* (Rome), pp. 85-166.



**Secondary Works.** HEITLAND, vol. ii, chaps. xxxv-xlvii; vol. iii, chaps. xlviii-lxi. GREENIDGE, *History of Rome*, vol. i. FERRERO, *The Greatness and the Decline of Rome*, vols. i-iii; vol. iv (chaps. i-vi). MERIVALE, *The Fall of the Roman Republic*. BEESLY, *The Gracchi, Marius and Sulla*. PELHAM, *Outlines of Roman History*, pp. 201-258, 333-397. GILMAN, *Story of Rome*, chaps. xii, xiii. ABBOTT, *Roman Political Institutions*, chaps. vi, vii. MOMMSEN, vol. iv (read chap. xi, "The Old Republic and the New Monarchy"). OMAN, *Seven Roman Statesmen of the Republic*. STRACHAN-DAVIDSON, *Cicero and the Fall of the Roman Republic*. TROLLOPE, *The Life of Cicero*. FOWLER, *Julius Cæsar*. HOLMES, *Cæsar's Conquest of Gaul* (for advanced students). LONG, *The Decline of the Roman Republic* (for general reference).

**Topics for Class Reports.** 1. Roman slavery: Johnston, *The Private Life of the Romans*, chap. v, pp. 87-111. 2. Marcus Livius Drusus, the champion of the Italians (consult by index any comprehensive history of Rome). 3. Cicero and his friends as admirers of things Greek: Mahaffy, *The Greek World under Roman Sway*, chap. vi. 4. The Conspiracy of Catiline: Church, *Roman Life in the Days of Cicero*, chap. vii. 5. Causes of the fall of the Republic: How and Leigh, *History of Rome*, chap. xxxi; Seignobos (Wilde ed.), *History of Ancient Civilization*, pp. 274-278.

## THIRD PERIOD — ROME AS AN EMPIRE

(31 B.C.-476 A.D.)

### I. THE PRINCIPATE

(31 B.C.-284 A.D.)

#### CHAPTER VII

#### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EMPIRE AND THE PRINCIPATE OF AUGUSTUS CÆSAR

(31 B.C.-14 A.D.)

**121. The Character of the Imperial Government ; the Dyarchy.** The hundred years of strife which ended with the battle of Actium left the Roman Republic, exhausted and helpless, in the hands of one wise enough and strong enough to remold its crumbling fragments in such a manner that the state, which seemed ready to fall to pieces, might prolong its existence for another five hundred years. It was a great work thus to create anew, as it were, out of anarchy and chaos, a political fabric that should exhibit such elements of perpetuity and strength. "The establishment of the Roman Empire," says Merivale, "was, after all, the greatest political work that any human being ever wrought. The achievements of Alexander, of Cæsar, of Charlemagne, of Napoleon are not to be compared with it for a moment."

Soon after his return from the East, Octavian laid down the extraordinary powers which he, as sole master of the legions, had been exercising. Then the Senate, acting doubtless in accordance with a previous understanding or the known wishes of Octavian, reinvested him with virtually the same powers but with republican titles ; for, mindful of the fate of Julius Cæsar, Octavian saw to it that the really absolute power which he received under the new arrangements was

veiled under the forms of the old Republic. He did not take the title of king. He knew how hateful to the people that name had been since the expulsion of the Tarquins, and he was mindful how many of the best men of Rome, including the great Julius, had perished because they gave the people reason to think that they were aiming at the regal power. Nor did he take the title of dictator, a name that since the time of Sulla had been almost as intolerable to the people as that of king. But he adopted or accepted the title of *Imperator*, — whence the name *Emperor*, — a title which, although it carried with it the absolute authority of the commander of the legions, still had clinging to it no odious memories. He also received from the Senate the honorary surname of *Augustus*, a title that hitherto had been sacred to the gods, and hence was free from all sinister associations. A monument of this act was erected in the calendar. It was decreed by the Senate that the sixth month of the Roman year should be called Augustus (whence our August) in commemoration of the Emperor, an act in imitation of that by which the preceding month had been given the name *Julius* (whence



FIG. 23. AUGUSTUS. (Vatican Museum)

This statue of Augustus is regarded as one of the best of Roman portraits

our July) in honor of Julius Cæsar. Common usage also bestowed upon Octavian the name of *Princeps*, which was only a designation of courtesy and dignity and which simply pointed out him who bore it as the "first citizen" of a free republic.

And as Octavian was careful not to wound the sensibilities of the lovers of the old Republic by assuming any title that in any way suggested regal authority and prerogative, so was he careful not to arouse their opposition by abolishing any of the republican offices or assemblies. He allowed all the old magistracies to exist as heretofore; but he himself absorbed and exercised the most important part of their powers and functions.

Likewise all the popular assemblies remained and were convened as usual to hold elections and to vote on measures laid before them. But Octavian, having been invested with both the consular and the tribunician power, had the right to summon them, to place in nomination persons for the various offices,<sup>1</sup> and to initiate legislation. The titular consuls and tribunes also, it is true, had this right, but after the new order of things had become firmly established during the long rule of Augustus they dared not exercise it without the concurrence of the new master of the state. Consequently the deliberations of the popular assemblies were really idle forms.

The Senate still existed,<sup>2</sup> but it was shorn of all real independence by the predominating influence of its first member, the *Princeps*. Octavian endeavored to raise the body to a higher standard. He reduced the number of senators — which had been raised by Antony to one thousand — to six hundred, and struck from the rolls the names of unworthy members and of obstinate republicans.

<sup>1</sup> The consuls were generally nominated by Augustus, and in order that a large number of his friends and favorites might be amused with the dignity, the term of office was reduced to a shorter period. At a later time the length of the consulate was shortened to two or three months.

<sup>2</sup> Since in the early Empire the Senate under the constitutional arrangements of Augustus shared the government with the emperor, the government of this period is by some called a *dyarchy*, which means a government by two persons. As a matter of fact, however, the Senate had only so much authority as the ruling emperor chose to give it. Some emperors, like Augustus, treated the body with respect and allowed it a real share in the government, while others rejected the theory of a joint rule of *Princeps* and Senate and ruled practically alone.

We may summarize all these changes<sup>1</sup> by saying that the monarchy abolished five hundred years before this was now slowly rising again amidst the old forms of the Republic. This is what was actually taking place; for the chief powers and prerogatives of the ancient king, which during the republican period had been gradually broken up and lodged in the hands of a great number of magistrates, colleges, and assemblies, were now being once more gathered up in the hands of a single man. This drift towards the unrestrained rule of a single person is the essence of the constitutional history of Rome for the first three centuries of the Empire; by the end of that period the concentration of all power in the hands of the Princeps was complete, and the veiled monarchy of Octavian emerges in the unveiled oriental monarchy of Diocletian (sect. 146).

**122. The Government of the Provinces.** The revolution that brought in the Empire effected a great improvement in the condition of the provincials. The government of all those provinces that were in an unsettled state and that needed the presence of a large military force Augustus<sup>2</sup> withdrew from the Senate and took the management of their affairs in his own hands. These were known as the *provinces of Caesar*. Instead of these countries being ruled by practically irresponsible proconsuls and proprætors, they were henceforth ruled by legates of the emperor, who were removable at his will and answerable to him for the faithful and honest discharge of the duties of their offices. Salaries were attached to their positions, and thus the scandalous abuses which had grown up in connection with the earlier system of self-payment through fees, requisitions, and the like devices were swept away.

The more tranquil provinces were still left under the control of the Senate, and were known as *public provinces*. These also profited by the change, since the emperor extended his care to them, and, as the judge of last appeal, righted wrongs and punished flagrant offenders against right and justice.

<sup>1</sup> Respecting all these governmental arrangements Professor Greenidge comments as follows: "Such was the settlement which was greeted,\*officially and unofficially, as a restoration of the Republic, but which later writers held, with equal reason, to be the commencement of the legitimate monarchy" (*Roman Public Life*, 1901, p. 339).

<sup>2</sup> From this on we shall refer to Octavian by this his honorary surname.

**123. The Defeat of Varus by the Germans under Arminius (9 A.D.).**

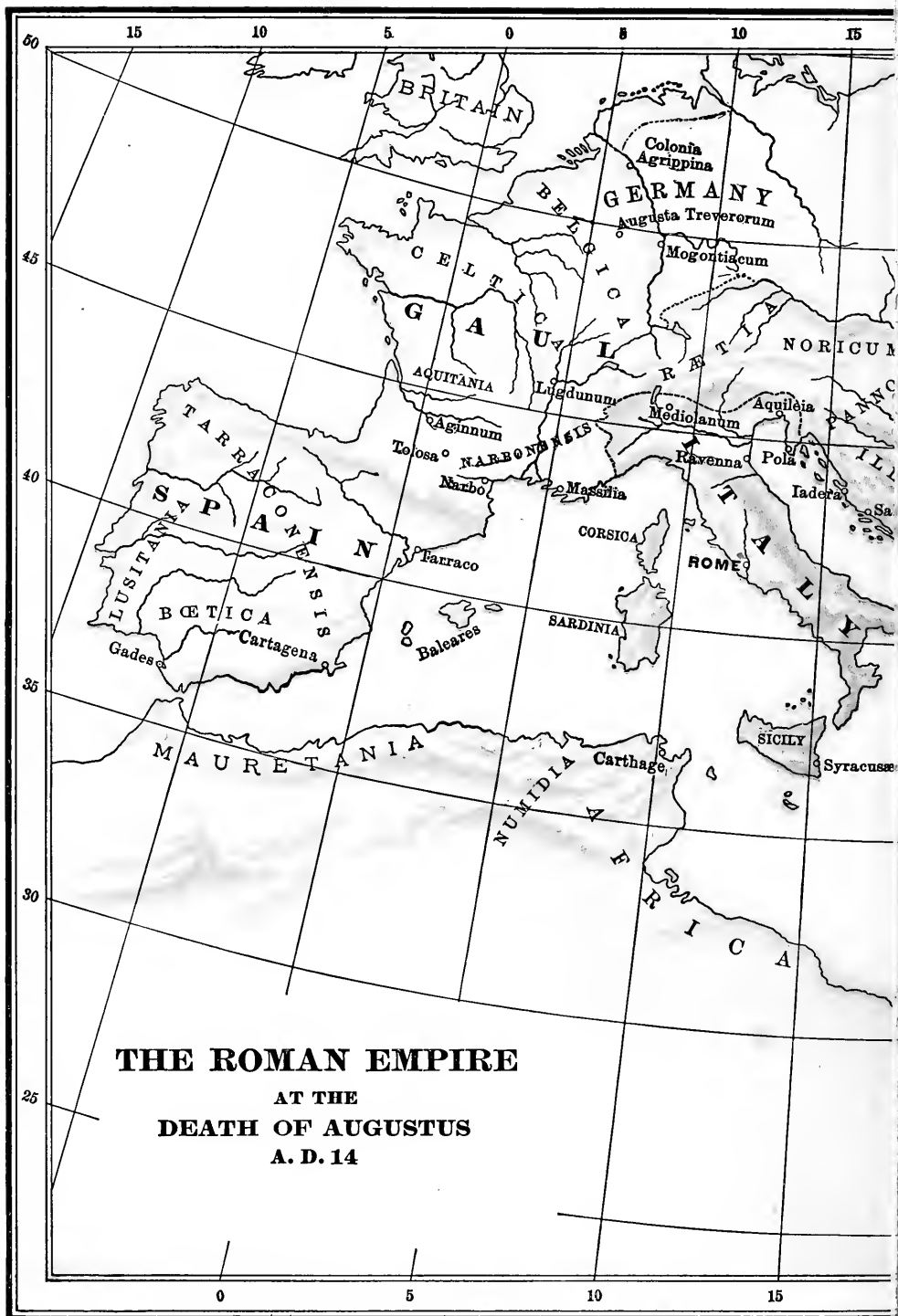
The reign of Augustus was marked by one of the most terrible disasters that ever befell the Roman legions. The general Quintilius Varus had made the mistake of supposing that he could rule the freedom-loving Germans, who had in part been brought under Roman authority, just as he had governed the servile Asiatics of the Eastern provinces, and had thereby stirred them to determined revolt. While the general was leading an army of three legions, numbering altogether about twenty thousand men, through the almost pathless depths of the Teutoburg Wood, he was surprised by the barbarians under their brave chieftain Hermann—called Arminius by the Romans—and his army destroyed.

The disaster caused great consternation at Rome. Augustus, wearied and worn already with the cares of empire and domestic affliction, was inconsolable. He paced his palace in agony, and kept exclaiming, "O Varus, Varus! give me back my legions! give me back my legions!"

The victory of Arminius over the Romans was an event of great significance in the history of European civilization. The Germans were on the point of being completely subjugated and put in the way of being Romanized, as the Celts of Gaul had already been. Had this occurred, the history of Europe would have been changed; for the Germanic element is the one that has given shape and color to the important events of the last fifteen hundred years. Among these barbarians, too, were our ancestors. Had Rome succeeded in exterminating or enslaving them, Britain, as Creasy says, might never have received the name of England, and the great English nation might never have had an existence.

**124. Literature and the Arts under Augustus.** The reign of Augustus lasted forty-four years, from 31 B.C. to 14 A.D. Although the government of Augustus, as we have learned, was disturbed by some troubles upon the frontiers, still, never before, perhaps, had the civilized world enjoyed so long a period of general rest from the turmoil of war. Three times during this auspicious reign the gates of the Temple of Janus at Rome, which were open in time of war and closed in time of peace, were shut. Only twice before during the











existence of the city had they been closed, so constantly had the Roman people been engaged in war.

This long repose from the strife that had filled all the preceding centuries was favorable to the upspringing of literature and art. Under the patronage of the emperor and that of his favorite minister Mæcenas, poets and writers flourished and made this the Golden Age of Latin literature. Many who lamented the fall of the Republic sought solace in the pursuit of letters; and in this they were encouraged by Augustus, as it gave occupation to many restless spirits that might otherwise have been engaged in political intrigues against his government. The four great names in the literature of the period are those of Vergil, Horace, Ovid, and Livy.<sup>1</sup>

Augustus was also a munificent patron of architecture and art. He adorned the capital with many splendid structures, including temples, theaters, porticoes, baths, and aqueducts. He said proudly, "I found Rome a city of brick; I left it a city of marble." The population of the city at this time was probably about one million. Two

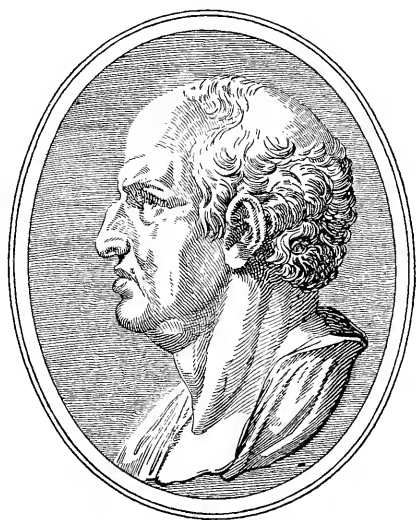


FIG. 24. MÆCENAS. (From a medallion)

other cities of the Empire — Antioch and Alexandria — are thought to have had each about this same number of citizens. These cities, too, were made magnificent with splendid architecture and works of art.

**125. Social Life at Rome under Augustus.** One of the most remarkable features of life at the capital during the reign of Augustus was the vast number of Roman citizens who were recipients of the state doles of corn. There were at least two hundred thousand male beneficiaries of this public charity,<sup>2</sup> which means that upwards of

<sup>1</sup> For brief notices of the works of these writers, see sects. 186, 189.

<sup>2</sup> The number had risen as high as 320,000, but both Julius Cæsar and Augustus purged the lists of unworthy claimants.

half a million people in the capital were unable or unwilling to earn independently their daily bread. The purchase of immense quantities of corn needed for these free distributions was one of the heaviest drains upon the imperial treasury.

Another striking feature of life at Rome at this time was the growing infatuation of the people for the bloody spectacles of the amphitheater. The emperor himself gives the following account of the spectacles that he presented: "Three times in my own name, and five times in that of my sons or grandsons, I have given gladiatorial exhibitions; in these exhibitions about ten thousand men have fought. . . . Twenty-six times in my own name, or in that of my sons or grandsons, I have given hunts of African wild beasts in the circus, the forum, the amphitheatres, and about thirty-five hundred beasts have been killed.

"I gave the people the spectacle of a naval battle beyond the Tiber, where now is the grove of the Cæsars. For this purpose an excavation was made eighteen hundred feet long and twelve hundred wide. In this contest thirty beaked ships, triremes or biremes, were engaged, besides more of smaller size. About three thousand men fought in these vessels in addition to the rowers."<sup>1</sup>

Still another phase of social life at Rome which arrests our attention was the loosening of the family ties. Divorces had multiplied, and the family seemed about to be dissolved, as had been the larger groups of the tribe and the gens. Augustus strove to arrest this downward tendency by edicts and laws in encouragement of marriage and in restraint of divorces. But the trouble was too deep-seated in the failing moral and religious life of the times to be reached and remedied by any measures of state.)

**126. The Religious Life.** The decay of religious faith had been going on for a long time. Augustus did all in his power to arrest the process. He restored the temples and shrines that had fallen into decay, renewed the ancient sacrifices, and erected new temples, not only at Rome but in every part of the Empire. The unauthorized

<sup>1</sup> *Monumentum Ancyranum*, chaps. xxii, xxiii; edited by William Fairley, Ph. D., *Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History*, published by the Department of History of the University of Pennsylvania. See Selections, p. 78.

foreign cults, particularly those from the Orient, which had been introduced at the capital, he drove out, and strove to awaken in the people a fresh veneration for the ancestral deities of Rome.

The Greek Apollo, however, was excepted from the list of proscribed alien gods. In honor of this great deity, who Augustus believed had secured him the victory at Actium, the emperor erected a splendid temple at Rome, and caused to be transported from Egypt and set up in the capital an immense obelisk, the emblem in Egyptian theology of the sun-god.

**127. The Death and Deification of Augustus.** In the year 14 A.D. Augustus died, having reached the seventy-sixth year of his age. His last words to the friends gathered about his bedside were, "If I have acted well my part in life's drama, greet my departure with your applause." By decree of the Senate, divine worship was accorded to him and temples were erected in his honor.

The cult of Augustus had developed, particularly in the Orient, while he was yet living. At first flush this worship of Cæsar seems to us strange and impious. But it will not seem so if we put ourselves at the point of view of the ancients. In the Orient the king had very generally been looked upon as in a sense divine. Thus in Egypt the Pharaoh was believed to be of the very race of the gods. It was natural, then, that the subjects of Rome in the Eastern provinces should look upon the head of the Empire as one lifted above ordinary mortals and possessed of divine qualities. This way of thinking caused the provincials of the Orient to become sincere and zealous worshipers in the temples and before the altars of the "divine Cæsar."

From the East the cult spread to the West, and became a favorite worship of the masses everywhere. Its establishment had far-reaching consequences, as we shall see; since at the very time that the polytheistic religion of the Græco-Roman world was taking on this form, there was springing up in a remote corner of the Empire a new religion with which this imperial cult must necessarily come into violent conflict.

For it was in the midst of the happy reign of Augustus, when profound peace prevailed throughout the civilized world,—the doors of

the Temple of Janus having been closed (sect. 17), — that Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea. The event was unheralded at Rome; yet it was, as we have intimated, filled with profound significance not only for the Roman Empire but for the world. Of the relation of Christianity to paganism, and particularly to the new cult of the Roman emperor, we shall speak later (sect. 139).

TABLE SHOWING THE NUMBER OF ROMAN CITIZENS AT DIFFERENT PERIODS OF THE REPUBLIC AND THE EMPIRE<sup>1</sup>

	CITIZENS OF MILITARY AGE
Under the later kings (Mommsen's estimate) . . . . .	20,000
338 B. C. . . . .	165,000 <sup>2</sup>
293 B. C. . . . .	262,322
251 B. C. . . . .	279,797
220 B. C. . . . .	270,213
204 B. C. . . . .	214,000 <sup>3</sup>
164 B. C. . . . .	327,022
115 B. C. . . . .	394,336
70 B. C. . . . .	900,000
27 B. C. . . . .	4,063,000 <sup>4</sup>
8 B. C. . . . .	4,233,000
13 A. D. . . . .	4,937,000
47 A. D. (under Claudius) . . . . .	6,944,000

<sup>1</sup> These figures embody what is perhaps the most important matter in Roman history, namely, the gradual admission of aliens to the full rights of the city until every freeman in the civilized world had become a citizen of Rome. This movement we have endeavored to trace in the text. Consult particularly sects. 42, 44, 92, 93, 114, 130, 143.

<sup>2</sup> These figures do not include the inhabitants of the Latin colonies nor of the allied states.

<sup>3</sup> The falling off from the number of the preceding census of 220 B. C. was a result of the Hannibalic War.

<sup>4</sup> These figures and those of the enumerations for 8 B. C. and 13 A. D. are from the *Monumentum Ancyranum*. The increased number given by the census of 70 B. C. over that of 115 B. C. registers the result of the admission to the city of the Italians at the end of the Social War (sect. 93). The tremendous leap upwards of the figures between 70 and 27 B. C. is probably to be explained not wholly by the admission during this period of aliens to the franchise but also, possibly, by the failure of the censors of the republican period to include in their enumerations the Roman citizens living in places remote from the capital. It is the opinion of E. Meyer, however, that the census of 27 B. C. included the whole Roman citizen population (men, women, and children) while the republican census gave only the number of the male citizens above seventeen years of age.

**Selections from the Sources.** *Monumentum Ancyranum (Res Gestæ Divi Augusti* — "The Deeds of Augustus"), vol. v, No. 7, of the *Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History*, published by the Department of History of the University of Pennsylvania. This forms one of the most important of the original sources for the reign of Augustus. It is a long bilingual inscription (Latin and Greek) discovered in 1595 on the walls of a ruined temple at Ancyra (whence the name), in Asia Minor. The inscription is a copy of a tablet which was set up in front of the mausoleum of Augustus at Rome. TACITUS, *Annals*, i, 2 (how Augustus made himself supreme at Rome). MUNRO, *Source Book*, pp. 143-148; Davis's *Readings* (Rome), pp. 166-185.

**References (Modern).** FERRERO, *The Greatness and Decline of Rome*, vols. iv (chaps. vii-xi), v. INGE, *Society in Rome under the Cæsars*, chap. i, "Religion" (deals with the decay of Roman religion and the establishment at the capital of oriental cults). CAPES, *The Early Empire*, chap. i, "Augustus." PELHAM, *Outlines of Roman History*, bk. v, chap. iii. BURY, *The Roman Empire* (Student's Series), pp. 1-163. FIRTH, *Augustus Cæsar*. THIERRY, *Tableau de l'Empire Romain* (teachers and mature students will find this work very suggestive; the book might be entitled "Rome's Place in Universal History").

**Topics for Class Reports.** 1. In theory the government of the early Empire was a dyarchy — a joint rule of the emperor and the Senate. How real was the participation of the Senate in the government? 2. The significance of the defeat of Varus: CREASY, *Decisive Battles of the World*, chap. v. 3. The life of the court under the early Empire: FRIEDLÄNDER, *Roman Life and Manners*, vol. i, pp. 70-97. 4. Means of communication: FRIEDLÄNDER, *Roman Life and Manners*, vol. i, pp. 268-322; DAVIS, *The Influence of Wealth in Imperial Rome*, pp. 80-105.

## CHAPTER VIII

### FROM TIBERIUS TO THE ACCESSION OF DIOCLETIAN

(14-284 A.D.)

**128. Principate of Tiberius (14-37 A.D.).** Tiberius, the adopted stepson of Augustus, became his successor. One of his first acts was to take away from the popular assemblies the right which they still nominally possessed of electing the yearly magistrates, and to bestow the same upon the Senate, which, however, as a rule elected candidates presented by the emperor. This meant practically the end of the participation of the people in the government of the state.

During the first years of his reign Tiberius used his virtually unrestrained authority with moderation, being seemingly desirous of promoting the best interests of all classes in his vast empire; and even to the last his government of the provinces was just and beneficent. The spirit in which he ruled the provincials is shown in his reply to a governor of a province who urged him to increase the tribute: "A good shepherd," he said, "should shear and not flay his sheep."<sup>1</sup>

But unfortunately Tiberius was of a morose, suspicious, and jealous nature, and the opposition which he experienced in the capital caused him, in his contest with his political and personal enemies, soon to institute there a most high-handed tyranny, which made the latter part of his reign a tragedy.<sup>2</sup> An old law, known as the *Law of Majestas*, which made it a capital offense for any one to speak a careless word, or even to entertain an unfriendly thought, respecting the emperor, was oppressively enforced. Rewards were offered to informers, and hence sprang up a class of persons called *delators*,

<sup>1</sup> Suetonius, *Tiberius*, xxxii.

<sup>2</sup> Eduard Meyer characterizes Tiberius as "the most pathetic figure in history." He was misrepresented by Tacitus.



who acted as spies upon society. Often false charges were made to gratify personal enmity; and many, especially of the wealthy class, were accused and put to death that their property might be confiscated.

Tiberius appointed as his chief minister and as commander of the prætorian guard<sup>1</sup> one Sejanus, a person of the lowest and most corrupt life. Then he retired to Capreæ, an islet in the Bay of Naples, and left to this man the management of affairs at the capital. For a time Sejanus ruled at Rome very much according to his own will. He murdered some of the best citizens, and caused possible heirs to the throne to be put out of the way in order that Tiberius might be constrained to name him as his successor. He even grew so bold as to plan the assassination of the emperor himself. His designs, however, became known to Tiberius, and the infamous and disloyal minister was arrested and put to death. During the remainder of his principate Tiberius ruled sternly, disdainfully indifferent to the love of his subjects. "I care not that the people hate me," he is represented as saying, "if they approve my deeds."

It was in the midst of the reign of Tiberius that, in a remote province of the Roman Empire, the Saviour was crucified. Animated by an unparalleled missionary spirit, his followers traversed the length and breadth of the Empire, preaching everywhere the "glad tidings." Men's loss of faith in the gods of the old mythologies, the softening and liberalizing influence of Greek culture, the unification of the whole civilized world under a single government, the widespread suffering and the inexpressible weariness of the oppressed and servile classes — all these things had prepared the soil for the seed of the new doctrines. In less than three centuries the Empire had become Christian not only in name but also very largely in fact. This conversion of Rome, of which we have here during the rule of Tiberius the beginning, is one of the most important events in all history. A new element is here introduced into civilization, an element which has given color and character to much of the history of all the succeeding centuries.

<sup>1</sup> This was a corps of select soldiers which had been created by Augustus, and which was designed for a sort of bodyguard to the emperor. It numbered about ten thousand men, and was given a permanent camp alongside the city walls and near one of the gates. It soon became a formidable power in the state and made and unmade emperors at will.

**129. Gaius Cæsar or Caligula (37-41 A.D.).** Tiberius was followed by Gaius Cæsar, better known as Caligula. Caligula's reign was, in the main, a tissue of follies. After a few months spent in arduous application to the affairs of the Empire, during which time his many acts of kindness and piety won for him the affection of all classes, the mind of the young emperor seemingly became disordered. He soon gave himself up to a life of dissipation. The cruel sports of the amphitheater possessed for him a strange fascination. He even entered the lists himself and fought as a gladiator upon the arena. After four years his insane career was brought to a close by some of the officers of the prætorian guard whom he had wantonly insulted.

**130. The Rule of Claudius (41-54 A.D.).** The successor of Caligula was his uncle, Claudius,<sup>1</sup> a man of strangely inconsistent moods and acts. At times his acts were those of a sagacious statesman and again those of an imbecile or an insane person.

His principate was made a landmark in the constitutional history of Rome by the admission of the Gallic nobles to the Roman Senate and the magistracies of the city. Tacitus has given us a paraphrase of a speech which the emperor made before the Senate in answer to the objections which were urged against such a course. The emperor touched first upon the fact that his own most ancient ancestor, although of Sabine origin, had been received into the city and made a member of the patrician order. This liberal policy of the fathers ought, he thought, to be followed by himself in his conduct of public affairs. Men of special talent, wherever found, should be transferred to Rome. "Nor am I unmindful of the fact," he continued, "that . . . from Etruria and Lucania and all Italy persons have been received into the Roman Senate. Finally, the city was extended to the Alps, so that not single individuals but entire provinces and tribes were given the Roman name. Is it a matter of regret to us that the Balbi came to us from Spain? that men not less distinguished migrated to Rome from Gallia Narbonensis? The descendants of these immigrants remain among us, nor do they yield to us in their

<sup>1</sup> As in the case of Caligula, Claudius was proclaimed emperor by the insolent prætorians. The Senate was powerless to do otherwise than to ratify their action.

devotion to the fatherland. What other cause was there of the downfall of Sparta and of Athens, states once powerful in arms, save this — that they closed their gates against the conquered as aliens?"<sup>1</sup> The generous policy here advocated by Claudius was acted upon, at least as to a part of the Gallic nobility, who were given admission to the Roman Senate.

The successors of Claudius in general followed his example. They not only admitted foreigners to the Senate, but freely granted Latin and Roman rights to provincials. This liberal policy was justified by its fruit. The provinces gave to Rome several of her best emperors. Trajan, Hadrian, and Marcus Aurelius were of Spanish origin, and Antoninus Pius was of Gallic descent.<sup>2</sup>

In the field of military enterprise the principate of Claudius was especially signalized by the conquest of Britain. Nearly a century had now passed since the invasion of the island by Julius Cæsar. Claudius, through his generals Plautius and Vespasian, subjugated the southern part of the island and made it into a Roman province under the name of *Britannia* (43 A.D.). Many towns soon sprang up here, which in time became important centers of Roman trade and culture, and some of which were the beginnings of great English towns of to-day.

The rule of Claudius was further distinguished by the construction of many important works of a utilitarian character. The Claudian Aqueduct, which the emperor completed, was a stupendous work, bringing water to the city from a distance of forty-five miles.

Throughout his life Claudius was ruled by intriguing favorites and unworthy wives. For his fourth wife he married the "wicked Agrippina," who secured his death by means of a dish of poisoned mushrooms, in order to make place for the succession of her son Nero, then only sixteen years of age.

**131. Rule of Nero (54-68 A.D.).** Nero was fortunate in having for his preceptor the great philosopher and moralist Seneca (sect. 190); but never was teacher more unfortunate in his pupil. For five years

<sup>1</sup> Tacitus, *Annals*, xi, 23. Compare these sentiments of Claudius with those of Titus Manlius (sect. 44).

<sup>2</sup> See F. R. Abbott, *Roman Political Institutions* (1901), p. 309.

Nero, under the influence of Seneca and Burrhus, the latter the commander of the prætorians, ruled with moderation and equity; then gradually breaking away from the guidance of his tutor Seneca, he entered upon a career filled with crimes of almost incredible enormity.

It was in the tenth year of his reign (64 A.D.) that the so-called Great Fire laid more than half of Rome in ashes. For six days and nights the flames surged like a sea through the valleys and about the base of the hills covered by the city. It was rumored that Nero

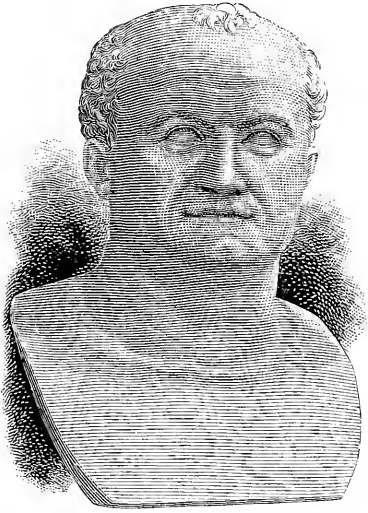


FIG. 25. VESPASIAN. (Museum at Naples)

had ordered the conflagration to be lighted in order to clear the ground so that he could rebuild the city on a more magnificent plan, and that from the roof of his palace he had enjoyed the spectacle and amused himself by singing a poem of his own composition entitled the *Sack of Troy*. To turn attention from himself, Nero accused the Christians of having conspired to burn the city in order to help out their prophecies. The doctrine which was taught by some of the new sect respecting the second coming of Christ and the destruction of the world by fire lent color to the

charge. The persecution that followed was one of the most cruel recorded in the history of the Church. Many victims were covered with pitch and burned at night to serve as torches in the imperial gardens. Tradition preserves the names of the apostles Peter and Paul as victims of this persecution.

The emperor was extravagant, and consequently always in need of money, which he secured through murders and confiscations. Among his victims was his old preceptor Seneca, who was immensely rich. On the charge of treason, he condemned him to death and confiscated his estate. At last the Senate declared him a public enemy and condemned him to death by scourging, to avoid which, aided by a servant, he took his own life.

**132. Galba, Otho, and Vitellius (68-69 A.D.).** These three names are usually grouped together, as their reigns were all short and

uneventful. The succession, upon the death of Nero and the extinction in him of the Julian-Claudian line, was in dispute, and the legions in different quarters supported the claims of their favorite leaders. One after another the three aspirants named were killed in bloody struggles for the imperial purple. The last, Vitellius, was hurled from the throne by the soldiers of Vespasian, the old and beloved commander of the legions in



FIG. 26. "JUDÆA CAPTA"  
(Coin of Vespasian)

Palestine, which were at this time engaged in war with the Jews.

**133. Vespasian (69-79 A.D.).** The accession of Flavius Vespasian marks the beginning of a period, embracing three reigns, known as the Flavian Age (69-96 A.D.). One of the most memorable events of Vespasian's reign was the capture and destruction of Jerusalem.

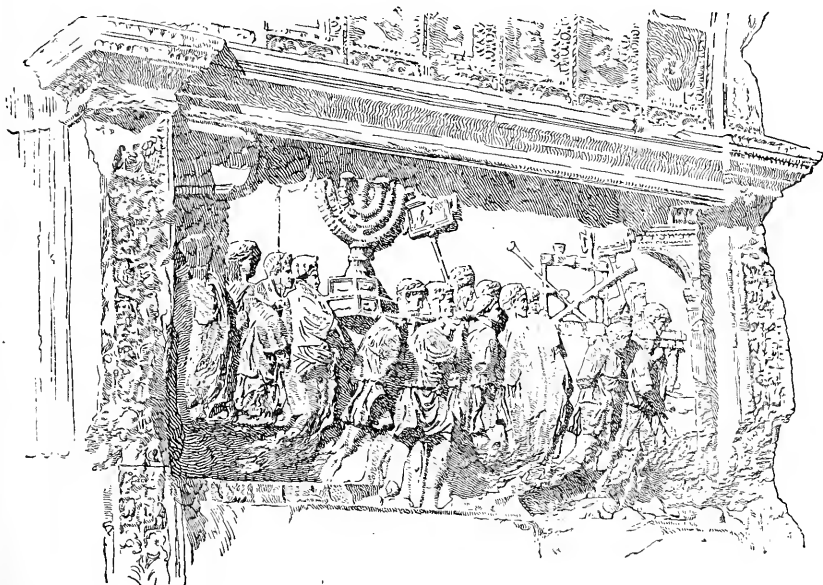


FIG. 27. TRIUMPHAL PROCESSION FROM THE ARCH OF TITUS. (From a photograph)

Showing the seven-branched candlestick and other trophies from the temple at Jerusalem

After one of the most harassing sieges recorded in history, the city was taken by Titus, son of Vespasian. A vast multitude of Jews who had crowded into the city—it was the period of the Pass-over—perished. In imitation of Nebuchadnezzar, Titus robbed the temple of its sacred utensils and bore them away as trophies. Upon the triumphal arch at Rome that bears his name may be seen at the present day the sculptured representation of the seven-branched golden candlestick, which was one of the memorials of the war.

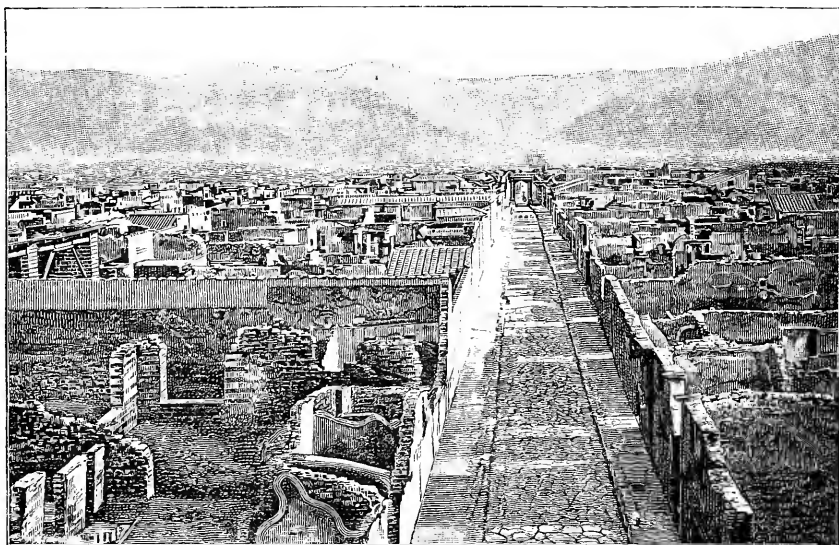


FIG. 28. A STREET IN POMPEII. (From a photograph)

After a most prosperous reign of ten years Vespasian died, 79 A. D., the first emperor after Augustus who had not met with a violent death.

**134. Titus (79-81 A. D.).** In a short reign of two years Titus won the title of "the Friend and the Delight of Mankind." He was unwearied in acts of benevolence and in the bestowal of favors. Having let a day slip by without some act of kindness performed, he is said to have exclaimed reproachfully, "I have lost a day."

Titus completed and dedicated the great Flavian amphitheater begun by his father, Vespasian. This vast structure, which seated over forty thousand<sup>1</sup> spectators, is better known as the Colosseum—a

<sup>1</sup> The old estimate of 80,000 is now regarded as an exaggeration.

name given it either because of its gigantic proportions, or on account of a colossal statue of Nero which happened to stand near it.

The reign of Titus, though so short, was signalized by two great disasters. The first was a conflagration at Rome, which was almost as calamitous as the Great Fire in the reign of Nero. The second was the destruction, by an eruption of Vesuvius, of the Campanian cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum. The cities were buried beneath showers of cinders, ashes, and streams of volcanic mud. Pliny the

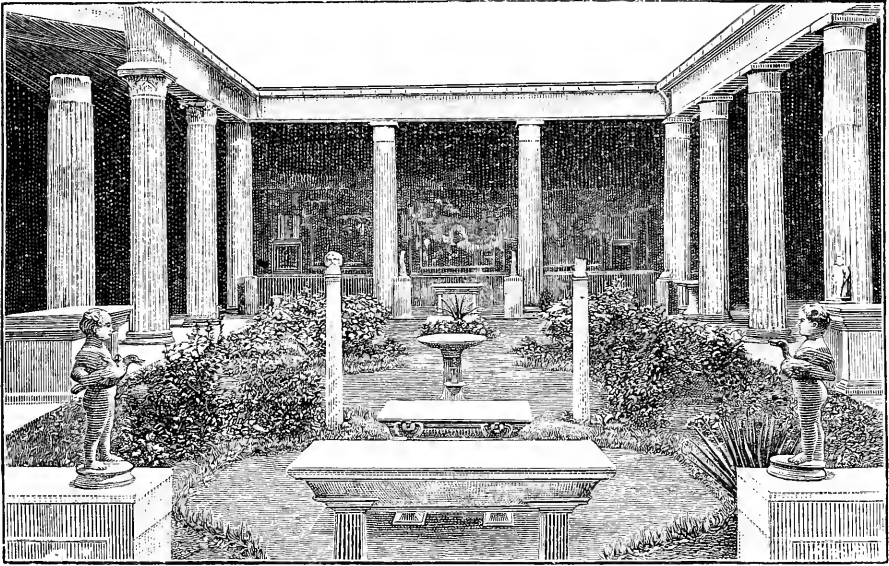


FIG. 29. HOUSE OF THE VETTI AT POMPEII. (From a photograph)

Elder, the great naturalist, venturing through curiosity too near the mountain to investigate the phenomenon, lost his life.<sup>1</sup>

**135. Domitian (81-96 A.D.).** Titus was followed by his brother Domitian, whose rule, after the first few years of admirable government, became a merciless tyranny. During the reign, however, transactions of interest and importance were taking place on the northern frontier lines. In Britain the able commander Agricola,

<sup>1</sup> During the past century extensive excavations have uncovered a large part of Pompeii and revealed to us the streets, homes, theaters, baths, shops, temples, and various monuments of the ancient city — presenting to us a vivid picture of Roman life during the imperial period eighteen hundred years ago.

the father-in-law of the historian Tacitus, subjected or crowded back the warlike tribes until he had extended the frontiers of the Empire far into what is now Scotland. Then, as a protection against the incursions of the Caledonians, the ancestors of the Scottish Highlanders, he constructed a line of fortresses from the Frith of Forth to the Frith of Clyde. Behind this shelter Roman civilization now began to develop rapidly in the new-formed province.

Under this emperor took place what is known in Church history as "the second persecution of the Christians," who incurred Domitian's special hatred through refusal to burn incense before his statues. The name of the emperor's niece Domitilla has been preserved as one of the victims of this persecution. This is significant, since it shows that the new faith was thus early finding adherents among the higher classes, even in the royal family itself.

Domitian was killed in his palace by members of his own household. The Senate



FIG. 30. TRAJAN. (From a statue in the museum at Naples)

"All the imperial portraits of this age, as preserved on coins and sculptures, are perfectly authentic, and the likenesses are consistent. In the British Museum the reader may see the features of these great Cæsars as faithfully reproduced as those of British statesmen in the National Portrait Gallery."—Fowler

ordered his infamous name to be erased from the public monuments and to be blotted from the records of the Roman state.



**136. The Five Good Emperors ; Rule of Nerva (96-98 A.D.).** The five emperors — Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines — who succeeded Domitian were elected by the Senate, which during this period assumed something of its former influence in the affairs of the Empire. The wise and beneficent administration of the government by these rulers, under whom the theory of a joint control by Princeps and Senate became something of a reality, won for them the distinction of being called "the five good emperors." This period probably marks the high tide of civilization in ancient times.

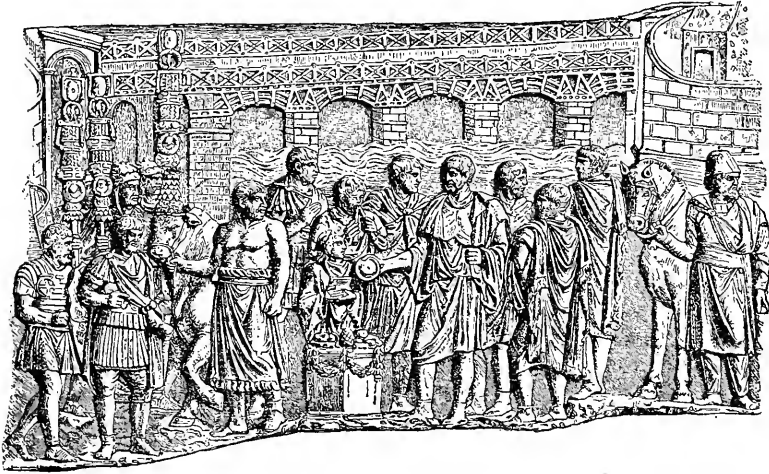


FIG. 31. BRIDGE OVER THE DANUBE, BUILT BY TRAJAN. (From a relief on Trajan's Column)

Nerva, who was an aged senator and an ex-consul, ruled paternally. He died after a short reign of sixteen months, and the scepter passed into the stronger hands of the able commander Trajan, whom Nerva had previously made his associate in the government.

**137. Trajan (98-117 A.D.).** Trajan was a native of Spain and a soldier by profession and talent. He was the first provincial to sit in the seat of the Cæsars. From this time forward provincials were to play a part of ever-increasing importance in the affairs of the Empire. It was the policy of Augustus — a policy adopted by most of his successors — to make the Danube in Europe and the Euphrates in Asia the limits of the Roman Empire in those respective quarters. But Trajan determined to push the frontiers of his dominions beyond

both these rivers. In the early part of his reign he was busied in wars against the Dacians, a people dwelling north of the Lower Danube. These troublesome enemies were subjugated, and Dacia was made into a province. The modern name *Rumania* is a monument of this Roman conquest and colonization beyond the Danube. The Rumanians to-day speak a language that in its main elements is largely of Latin origin.<sup>1</sup>

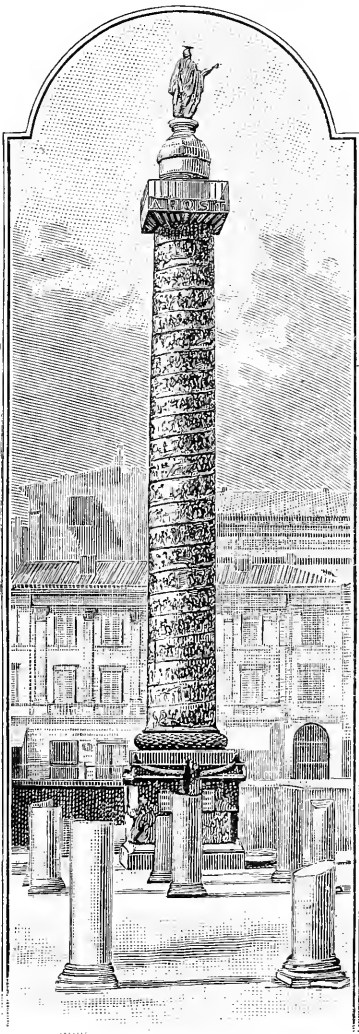


FIG. 32. TRAJAN'S COLUMN  
(From a photograph)

"A chiselled picture-book of the Dacian War, to which almost everywhere we lack the text."—

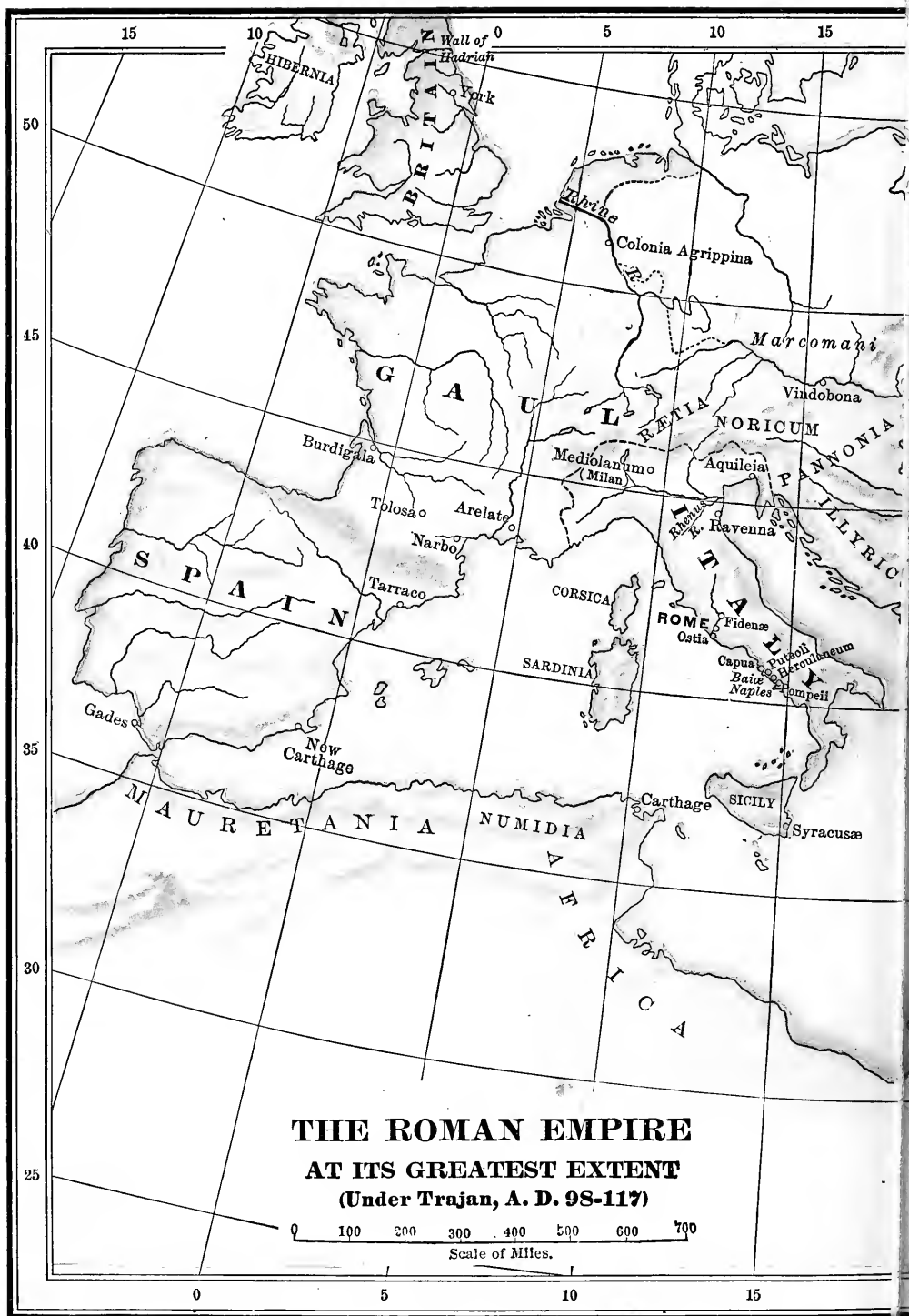
Mommsen

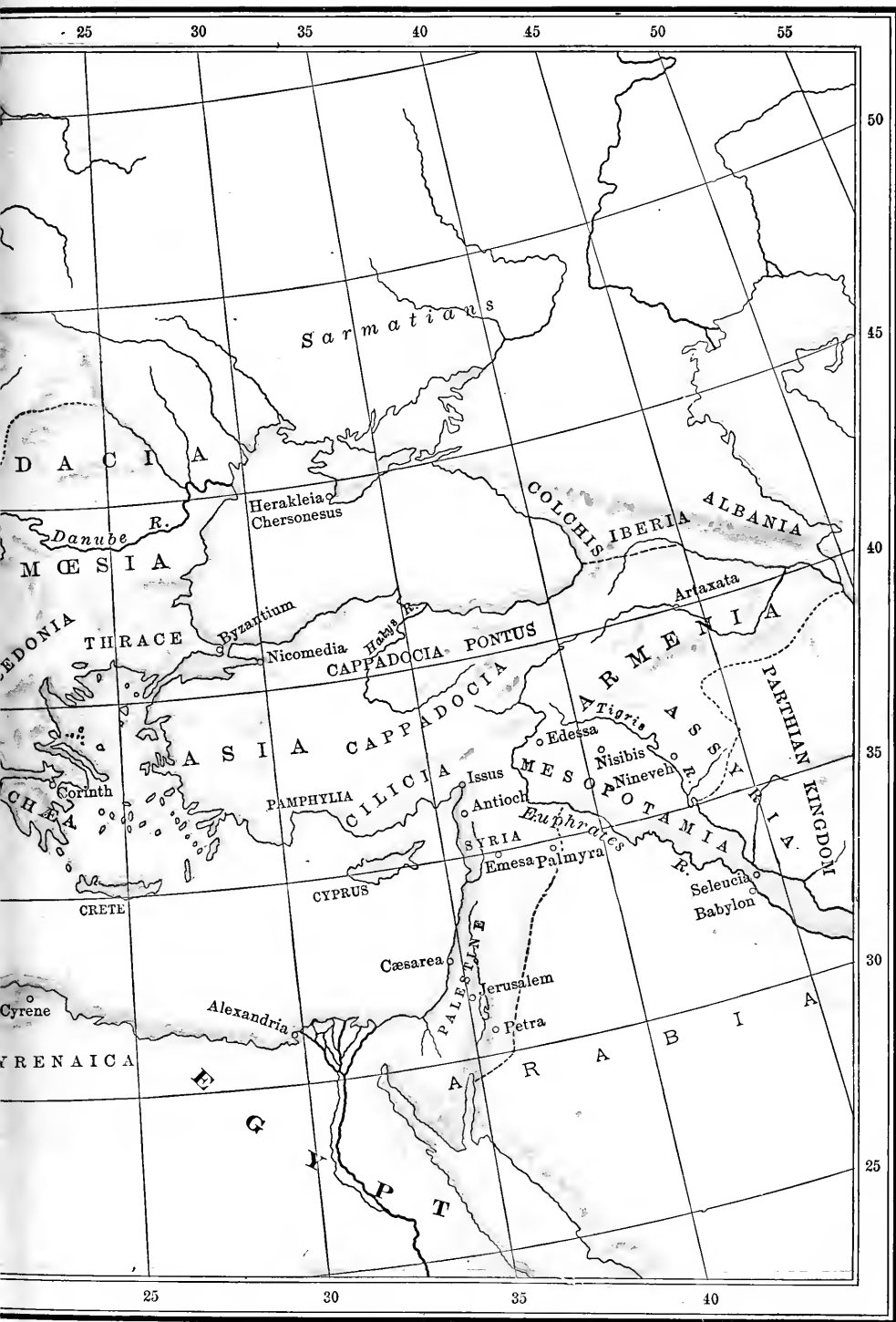
As a memorial of his achievements the emperor erected, in what came to be known as Trajan's Forum, a splendid marble shaft called Trajan's Column. To-day, after eighteen centuries, the great pillar is in almost perfect preservation. It is one hundred and forty-seven feet high, and is wound from base to summit with a spiral band of sculptures containing more than twenty-five hundred human figures. Its pictured sides are the best and almost the only record we now possess of the Dacian wars of the emperor.

In the latter years of his reign (114-116 A.D.) Trajan led his legions to the East, crossed the Euphrates, reduced Armenia, and wrested from the Parthians most of the lands which had once formed the heart of the Assyrian monarchy. Out of the territories thus conquered Trajan made three new

<sup>1</sup> The Romanic-speaking peoples of Rumania and the neighboring regions number about ten millions. It seems probable that during mediæval times there was a large immigration into the present Rumania of Latin-speaking people from the districts south of the Danube.









provinces, which bore the ancient names of Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria. Another province which he created in these remote regions was known as Arabia Petræa,<sup>1</sup> which included the ancient Bible land of Edom with its celebrated capital Petra.

To Trajan belongs the distinction of having extended the boundaries of the Empire to the most distant points to which Roman ambition and prowess were ever able to push them.

Respecting the rapid spread of Christianity at this time, the character of the early professors of the new faith, and the light in which they were viewed by the rulers of the Roman world, we have very important evidence in a certain letter written by Pliny the Younger (sect. 190) to the emperor in regard to the Christians of Pontus, in Asia Minor, of which remote province Pliny was governor. Pliny speaks of the new creed as a "contagious superstition that had seized not cities only but the lesser towns also, and the open country." Yet he could find no fault in the converts to the new doctrines. Notwithstanding this, however, because the Christians steadily refused to sacrifice to the Roman gods, he ordered many to be put to death for their "inflexible obstinacy."

Trajan died 117 A.D. His principate, after that of Augustus, was the most fortunate that had befallen the lot of the Roman people.

**138. Hadrian (117-138 A.D.).** Hadrian, a kinsman of Trajan, succeeded him in the imperial office. He possessed great ability and displayed admirable moderation and good judgment in the administration of the government. He prudently abandoned the territory beyond the Euphrates that had been acquired by Trajan, and made that stream once more the eastern boundary of the Empire.

<sup>1</sup> The Roman province of Arabia Petræa corresponded roughly to the biblical Edom and Moab. Petra (probably the *Sela*, "the Rock," of the Bible writers) was the stronghold and capital of the former region. Its ruins lie in a vast natural amphitheater in the sterile mountains of Edom. The importance of the place was due to its control of several of the great commercial routes of the ancient East. It was a city of note in Hellenistic times, and in the second and third centuries of our era enjoyed great prosperity under the Romans. Many of the later rock-cut tombs (of Græco-Roman type) which line the high cliffs inclosing the site of the city were the tombs of Roman merchant princes and military officers. The exquisite rock-cutting shown in the illustration facing p. 130 (it probably dates from the first century A.D.) is one of the best-preserved rock-hewn façades to be seen to-day in any of the lands included within the boundaries of the old Roman Empire.

More than fifteen years of his reign were spent by Hadrian in making tours of inspection through all the different provinces of the Empire. He visited Britain, and secured the Roman possessions there against the Picts and Scots by erecting a continuous wall, about seventy miles in length, across the island from the Tyne to the Solway Firth. This rampart was constructed some distance to the south of the line of fortified stations that had been established by Agricola (sect. 135). The Hadrian Wall, in places well preserved, and broken at intervals by the ruins of old watchtowers and stations,

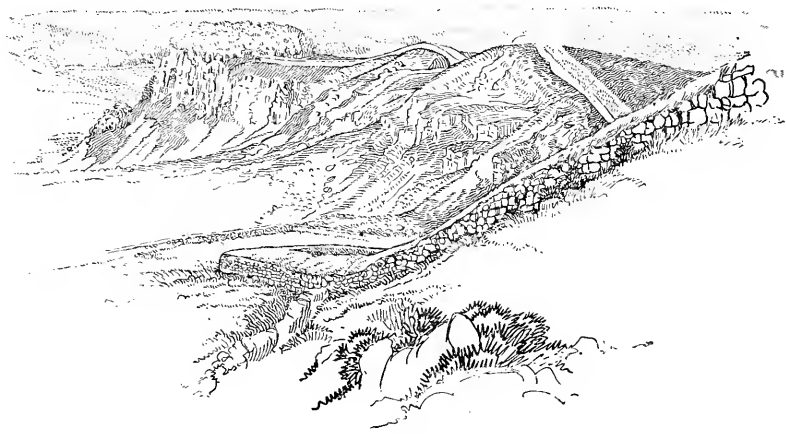


FIG. 33. THE HADRIAN WALL. (From a photograph)

can still be traced over the low hills of the English moorlands almost from sea to sea.<sup>1</sup> There exists nowhere in the lands that once formed the provinces of the empire of Rome any more impressive memorial of her world-wide dominion than these ramparts, along which for three hundred years and more her sentinels kept watch and ward for civilization against the barbarian marauders of Caledonia.

On the Continent, in the upper regions of the Rhine and the Danube, Hadrian likewise secured the frontier by constructing a palisade and a chain of forts extending from one river to the other.

<sup>1</sup> The best work on the rampart is J. C. Bruce's *The Roman Wall* (London, 1851). *Handbook to the Roman Wall*, by the same author, is an abridgment of his larger work. One of the best-preserved sections of the wall can be easily reached from the Haltwhistle station on the railroad between Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Carlisle. The student traveler in those parts should not fail to examine these interesting memorials of the Roman occupation of Britain.



After his visit to Britain Hadrian returned to Gaul, and then inspected in different tours all the remaining provinces of the Empire. Many of the cities which he visited he adorned with temples, theaters, and other buildings. Upon Athens, particularly, he lavished large sums in art embellishments, reviving in a measure the fading glories of the Periclean Age.<sup>1</sup>

In the year 132 the Jews in Palestine, who had in a measure recovered from the blow Titus had given their nation (sect. 133), broke out in desperate revolt, because of the planting of a Roman colony upon the almost desolate site of Jerusalem, and the placing of the statue of Jupiter in the holy temple. More than half a million Jews are said to have perished in the hopeless struggle, and the most of the survivors were driven into exile—the last dispersion of the race (135 A.D.).

The latter years of his reign Hadrian passed at Rome. It was here that this princely builder erected his most splendid structures. Among these were a magnificent temple consecrated to the goddesses Venus and Roma, and a vast mausoleum (now the castle of St. Angelo) erected on the banks of the Tiber and designed as a tomb for himself.

**139. The Antonines (138-180 A.D.).** Aurelius Antoninus (surnamed Pius), the adopted son of Hadrian, and his successor, gave the Roman Empire an administration singularly pure and parental. Throughout



FIG. 34. HADRIAN. (Capitoline Museum, Rome)

All Roman portraits before the time of Hadrian it will be noticed have the face clean-shaven. Hadrian introduced the practice of wearing a beard. This now became the mode, as is shown by the portraits from this time forward

<sup>1</sup> Besides erecting many new structures, he completed the great temple of Olympian Zeus begun by the tyrant Pisistratus.

his long reign of twenty-three years the Empire was in a state of profound peace. The attention of the historian is attracted by no striking events, which fact, as many have not failed to observe, illustrates admirably the oft-repeated epigram, "Happy is that people whose annals are brief."

Antoninus, early in his reign, had united with himself in the government his adopted son Marcus Aurelius, and upon the death of the former (161 A.D.) the latter succeeded quietly to his place and work. Aurelius' studious habits won for him the title of *philosopher*. He belonged to the school of the Stoics, and was a most thoughtful

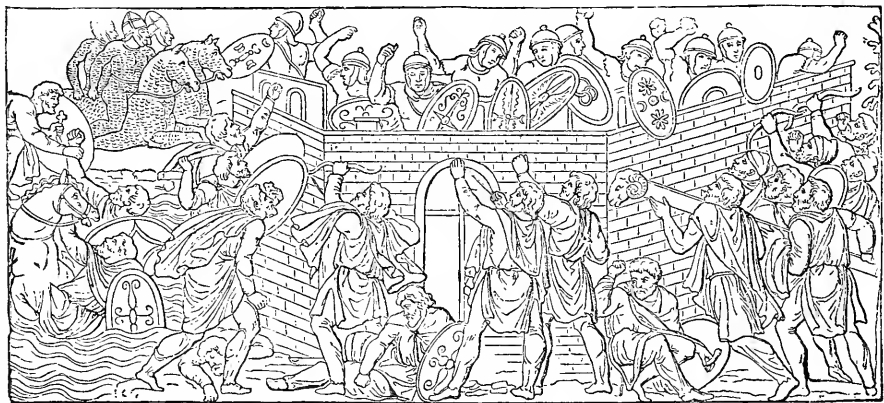
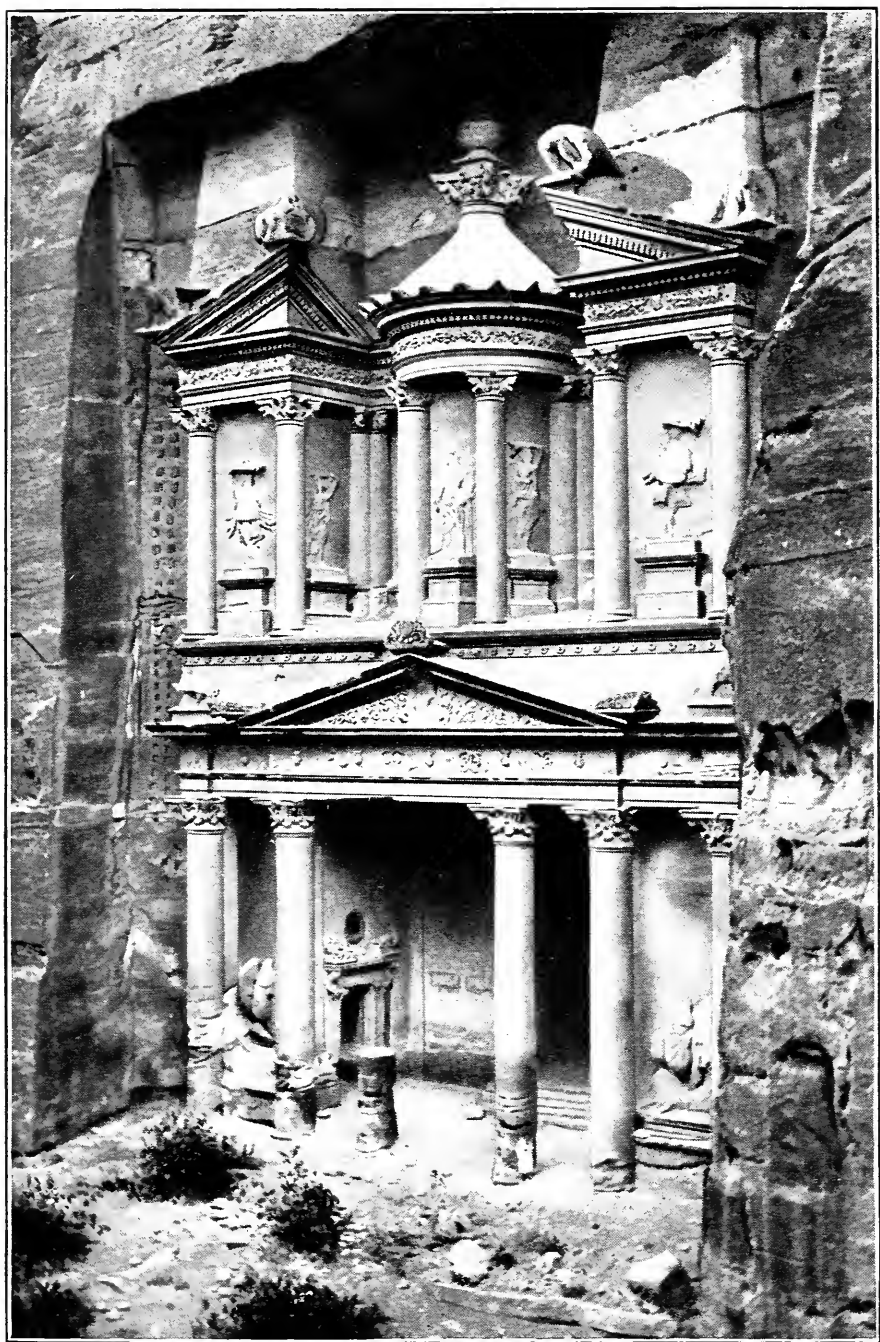


FIG. 35. SIEGE OF A CITY. (From Trajan's Column)

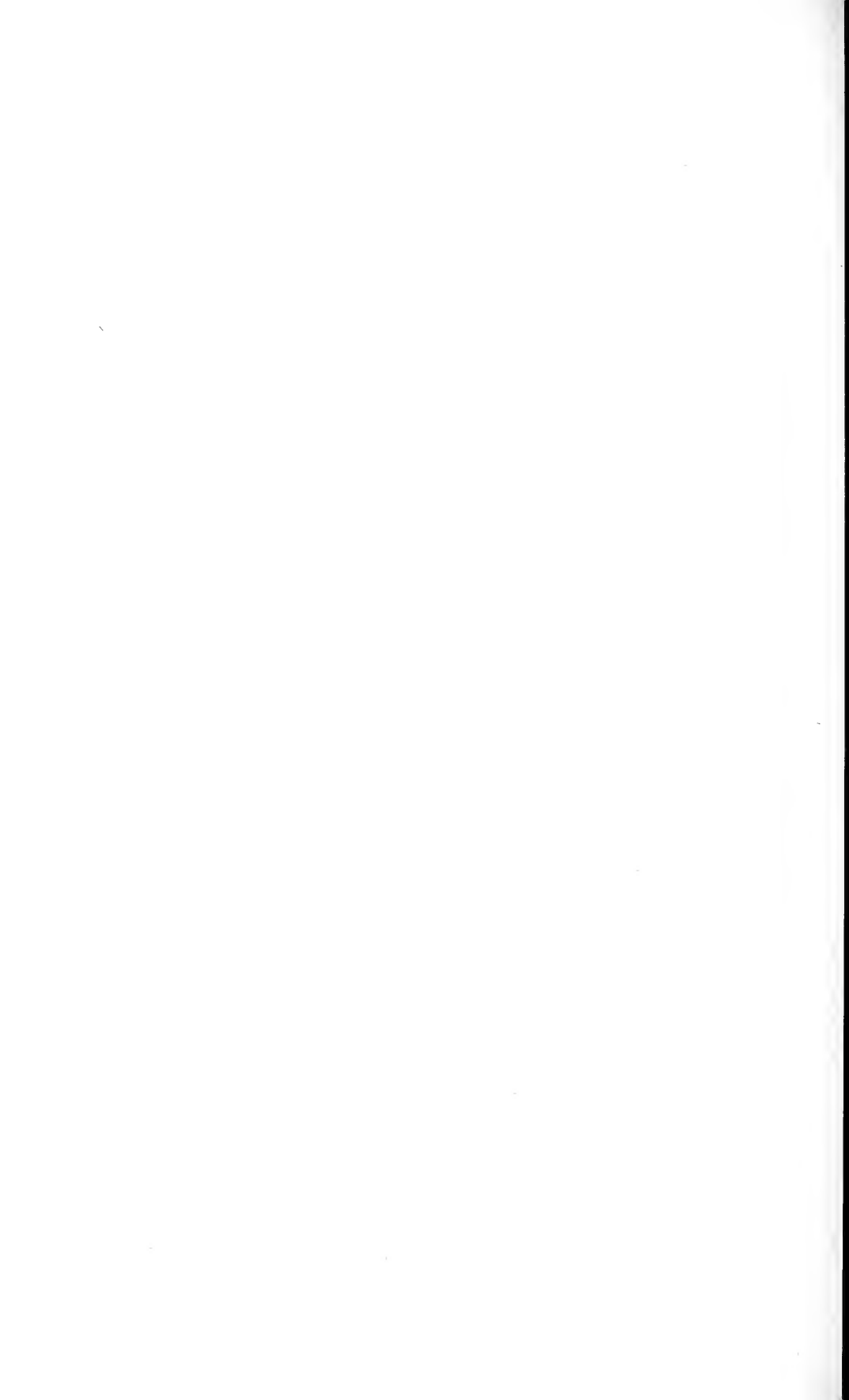
writer. His *Meditations* breathe the tenderest sentiments of devotion and benevolence, and make the nearest approach to the spirit of Christianity of all the writings of pagan antiquity. He established an institution or home for orphan girls, and, finding the poorer classes throughout Italy burdened by their taxes and greatly in arrears in paying them, he caused all the tax claims to be heaped in the Forum and burned.

The tastes and sympathies of Aurelius would have led him to choose a life passed in retirement and study at the capital; but hostile movements of the Parthians, and especially invasions of the barbarians along the Rhenish and Danubian frontiers, called him from his books and forced him to spend most of the latter years of his reign in the camp. The Parthians, who had violated their treaty with



A ROCK-HEWN FAÇADE AT PETRA, ARABIA PETRÆA. (From a photograph: see p. 127. n.)

Most of the numerous rock-cuttings at Petra are tombs, but several of the largest and most elaborate, including the one here shown, were probably temples or public shrines



Rome, were chastised by the lieutenants of the emperor, and a part of Mesopotamia again fell under Roman authority (165 A.D.).

This war drew after it a series of terrible calamities. The returning soldiers brought with them the Asiatic plague, which swept off vast numbers, especially in Italy, where entire cities and districts were depopulated. The Empire never wholly recovered from the effects of this pestilence. In the general distress and panic the superstitious people were led to believe that it was the new sect of Christians that had called down upon the nation the anger of the gods. Aurelius permitted a fearful persecution to be instituted against them, during which the celebrated Christian fathers, Justin Martyr at Rome and the aged Polycarp at Smyrna, suffered death.

It should be noted that the persecution of the Christians under the pagan emperors sprang from political and social rather than from religious motives, and that is why we find the names of the best emperors, as well as those of the worst, in the list of persecutors. It was believed that the welfare of the state was bound up with the careful performance of the rites of the national worship; and hence, while the Roman rulers were usually very tolerant, allowing all forms of worship among their subjects, still they required that men of every faith should at least recognize the Roman gods and burn incense before their statues, and particularly before the statue of the emperor (sect. 127). This the Christians steadily refused to do. Their neglect of the services of the temple, it was believed, angered the gods and endangered the safety of the state, bringing upon it drought, pestilence, and every disaster. This was a main reason for their persecution by the pagan emperors.

But pestilence and persecution were both forgotten amidst the imperative calls for immediate help that now came from the North. The barbarians were pushing in the Roman outposts and pouring over the frontiers. A tribe known as the Marcomanni even crossed the Alps and laid siege to Aquileia, "the gate of Italy." Not since the invasion of the Cimbri and the Teutons (sect. 90) had the inhabitants of any city of Italy seen the barbarians before their gates. To the panic of the plague was added this new terror. Aurelius placed himself at the head of his legions and hurried beyond the Alps. He

checked the inroad of the barbarians, but could not subdue them, so weakened was the Empire by the ravages of the pestilence and so exhausted was the treasury from the heavy and constant drains upon it. At last his weak body gave way beneath the hardships of his numerous campaigns, and he died in his camp at Vindobona (now Vienna) in the nineteenth year of his reign (180 A.D.).

The united voice of Senate and people pronounced him a god, and divine worship was accorded to his statue. Never was Monarchy so justified of her children as in the lives and works of Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius. As Merivale, in dwelling upon their virtues, very justly remarks, "The blameless career of these illustrious princes has furnished the best excuse for Cæsarism in all after ages."

**140. The State of the Provinces.** The close of the auspicious era of the Antonines invites us to cast a glance over the Empire, in order that we may note the condition of the population at large. As we have already observed, the great revolution which brought in the Empire was a revolution which redounded to the interests of the provincials (sect. 122). Even under the worst emperors the administration of affairs in the provinces was as a rule prudent, humane, and just. It is probably true that, embracing in a single view all the countries included in the Roman Empire, the second century of the Christian era marks the happiest period in their history. Without question there is no basis for a comparison, but only for a contrast, between the condition of the countries of the Orient under the earlier Roman emperors and the condition of the same lands to-day under their arbitrary and rapacious Mohammedan rulers. "Wherever a corner of the country," says Mommsen, speaking particularly of Asia Minor, "neglected under the desolation of the fifteen hundred years which separate us from that time, is opened up to investigation, there the first and most powerful feeling is that of astonishment, one might almost say of shame, at the contrast of the wretched and pitiful present with the happiness and splendor of the past Roman age."<sup>1</sup>

The cities and towns of the Eastern countries, as well as hundreds of similar communities in Spain, in Gaul, in Britain, and in other

<sup>1</sup> *The Provinces of the Roman Empire* (1887), vol. i, p. 384.

lands of the West, were enjoying, under the admirable municipal system developed by the Romans, a measure of local self-government probably equal to that enjoyed at the present time by the municipalities of the most advanced of the countries of modern Europe. This wise system had preserved or developed the sentiment of local patriotism and civic pride. The cities vied with one another in the erection of theaters, amphitheaters, baths, temples, and triumphal arches, and

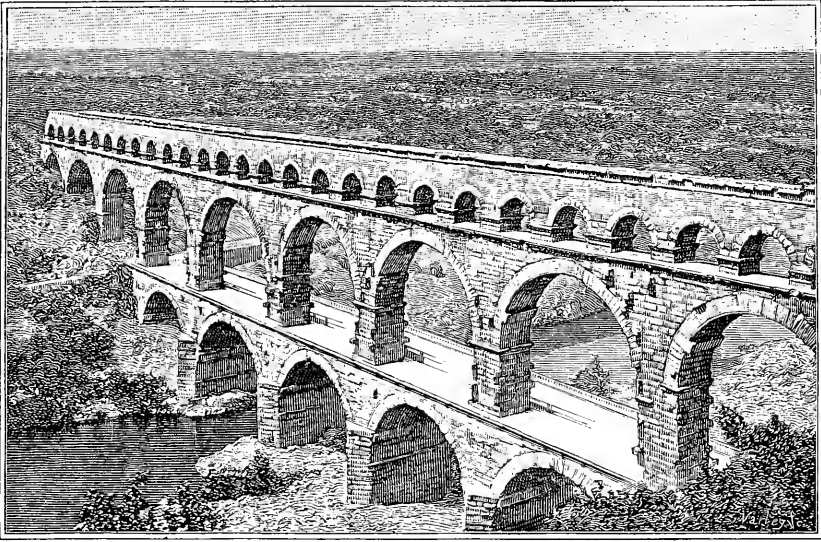


FIG. 36. ROMAN AQUEDUCT AND BRIDGE, DATING FROM THE EARLY EMPIRE, NEAR NÎMES, FRANCE. (Present condition)

This is one of the finest and most impressive of the existing monuments of the old Roman builders. The lower row of arches carries a modern roadway

in the construction of aqueducts, bridges, and other works of a utilitarian nature. In these undertakings they were aided not only by liberal contributions made by the emperors from the imperial treasury but by the generous gifts and bequests of individual citizens. Private munificence of this character was as remarkable a feature of this age as is the liberality of individuals at the present day in the endowment of educational and charitable institutions. As the representative of this form of ancient liberality, we have Atticus Herodes (about 104-180 A.D.), a native of Athens. He was the Andrew Carnegie of his time. With a truly royal munificence he built at his own expense at

Athens a splendid marble stadium large enough to hold the entire population of the city. To the city of Troas in Asia Minor he made a gift equivalent to over a half million dollars to aid the inhabitants in the construction of an aqueduct.

Scores of majestic ruins scattered throughout the lands once forming the provinces of the ancient empire of Rome bear impressive testimony not only as to the populousness, culture, and enterprise of the urban communities of the Roman dominions, but also as to

the generally wise, fostering, and beneficent character of the earlier imperial rule.



FIG. 37. COMMODUS REPRESENTED AS THE ROMAN HERCULES. (From bust found in the Horti Lamiani, Rome)

**141. "The Barrack Emperors."** Commodus, son of Marcus Aurelius, was a most unworthy successor of his illustrious father. His name, like that of Nero, is infamous. Through his crimes and debaucheries he brought the imperial office to its lowest estate. For nearly a century after his death (from 192 to 284 A.D.) the emperors were elected by the army, and hence the rulers for this period have been called the "Barrack Emperors." The

character of the period is revealed by the fact that of the twenty-five emperors who mounted the throne during this time all except four came to death by violence. To internal disorders was added the terror of barbarian invasions. On every side savage hordes were breaking into the Empire to rob, to murder, and to burn.

**142. The Public Sale of the Empire (193 A.D.).** The beginning of these troublous times was marked by a shameful proceeding on the part of the prætorians. These soldiers, having slain the successor of Commodus, gave out notice that they would sell the Empire to the highest bidder. It was accordingly set up for sale at their camp and



struck off to Didius Julianus, a wealthy senator, who promised twenty-five thousand sesterces to each of the twelve thousand soldiers at this time composing the guard. So the price of the Empire was three hundred million sesterces (about twelve million dollars).

As soon as the news of the disgraceful transaction reached the legions on the frontiers, they rose in indignant revolt. Each army proclaimed its favorite commander emperor. The leader of the Danubian troops was Septimius Severus, a man of great energy and force of character. He knew that there were other competitors for the throne and that the prize would be his who first seized it. Instantly he set his veterans in motion and was soon at Rome. The prætorians were no match for the trained legionaries of the frontiers, and did not even attempt to defend their emperor, who was taken prisoner and



FIG. 38. CARACALLA. (Museum at Naples)

put to death after a reign of sixty-five days. As a punishment for the insult they had offered to the Roman state the unworthy prætorians were disbanded and banished from the capital, and a new body-guard of fifty thousand legionaries was organized to take their place.

**143. Caracalla (211-217 A.D.).** Severus, after a prosperous reign, died in Britain, leaving the Empire to his two sons, Caracalla and Geta. Caracalla murdered his brother and then ordered Papinian, the celebrated jurist, to make a public argument in vindication of the fratricide. When that great lawyer refused, saying that "it was easier to commit such a crime than to justify it," he put him to death. Driven by remorse and fear, he fled from the capital and wandered

about the provinces. Finally, after a reign of six years marked by many deeds of incredible wickedness, the monster was slain in Asia.

Caracalla's sole political act of real importance was the bestowal of citizenship upon all the free inhabitants of the Empire; and this he did, not to give them a just privilege, but that he might collect from them certain special taxes which only Roman citizens had to pay. Before the reign of Caracalla it was only particular classes of the provincials, or the inhabitants of some particular city or province, that, as a mark of special favor, had from time to time been admitted to the rights of citizenship. But by this wholesale act of Caracalla the entire free population of the Empire that did not already possess the rights of the city was made Roman, at least in name and nominal privilege. That vast work of making the whole world Roman, the beginnings of which we saw in the dawn of Roman history (sect. 5), was now completed.<sup>1</sup> "Rome was the world, and the world was Rome."

**144. The Age of the Thirty Tyrants (251-268 A.D.).** For about a generation after Caracalla the imperial scepter passed rapidly from the hands of one emperor to those of another. Then came the so-called Age of the Thirty Tyrants. The throne being held by weak emperors, there sprang up in every part of the Empire competitors for it — several rivals frequently appearing in the field at the same time. The barbarians pressed upon all the frontiers and thrust themselves into all the provinces.<sup>2</sup> The Empire seemed on the point of falling to pieces.<sup>3</sup> But a fortunate succession of five good emperors — Claudius, Aurelian, Tacitus, Probus, and Carus (268-284 A.D.) — restored for a time the ancient boundaries and again

<sup>1</sup> It must not be supposed, however, that the edict of Caracalla did much more than register an already accomplished fact. It seems probable that by this time the greater part of the freemen of the Empire were already enjoying the Roman franchise.

<sup>2</sup> The Parthians were a menace in the East, the Franks crossed the Rhine and harried Gaul; the Goths, crossing the Danube, raided Mœsia, Thrace, and Macedonia, while their fleets from the Euxine ravaged the seaboard of Asia Minor; Athens, Corinth, and other cities of continental Greece were sacked.

<sup>3</sup> It was during this period that the Emperor Valerian (253-260 A.D.), in a battle with the Persians before Edessa, in Mesopotamia, was defeated and taken prisoner by Sapor, the Persian king. A large rock tablet (Fig. 39), still to be seen near the Persian town of Shiraz, commemorates the triumph of Sapor over the unfortunate emperor.

forced together into some sort of union the fragments of the shattered state.<sup>1</sup> But the Empire bore the marks of the long anarchy. Large districts were almost depopulated, and the land was lying waste. Industry and commerce had been brought almost to a standstill.

The most noted of the usurpers of authority in the provinces during the period of anarchy was Zenobia, the ruler of the celebrated city of Palmyra in the Syrian desert. Boldly assuming the title *Queen of the East*, she bade defiance to Rome. Aurelian marched against

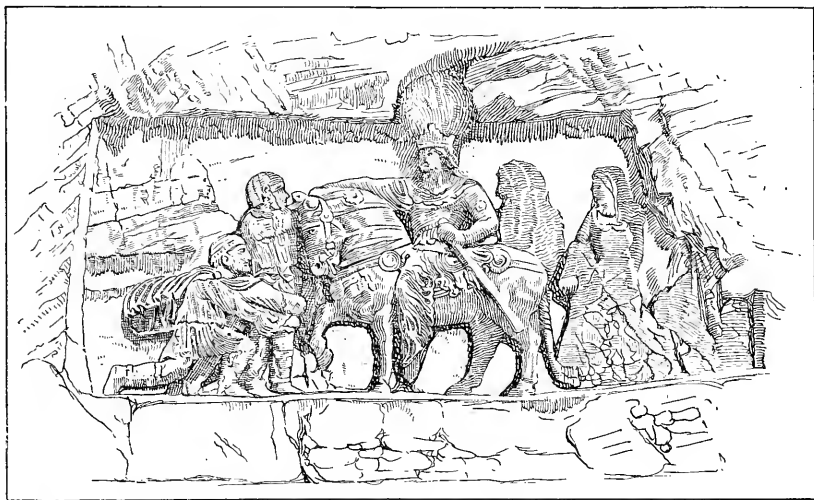


FIG. 39. TRIUMPH OF SAPOR OVER VALERIAN. (See p. 136, n. 3)

her, and defeating her armies in the open field, drove them within the walls of Palmyra. After a long siege the city was taken, and, in punishment for a second uprising, given to the flames.<sup>2</sup>

The ruins of Palmyra are among the most interesting remains of Greek and Roman civilization in the East. For a long time even the

<sup>1</sup> During the reign of Aurelian the Alemanni made an incursion into Italy and threatened Rome. After their expulsion the emperor, in order to insure the safety of the capital in case of future inroads of the barbarians, began the erection of a new wall around the city, which had now greatly outgrown the old Servian defenses (sect. 22). This wall, which was completed by Probus, was over twelve miles in extent.

<sup>2</sup> Zenobia was carried a captive to Rome. After having been led in golden chains in the triumphal procession of Aurelian, the queen was given a beautiful villa in the vicinity of Tibur, where, surrounded by her children, she passed the remainder of her checkered life.

site of the city was lost to the civilized world. The Bedouins, however, knew the spot, and told strange stories of a ruined city with splendid temples and long colonnades far away in the Syrian desert. Their accounts awakened an interest in the wonderful city, and towards the close of the seventeenth century some explorers reached the spot. The sketches they brought back of the ruins of the long-lost city produced almost as much astonishment as did the discoveries at a later time of Botta and Layard at Nineveh.

**Selections from the Sources.** TACITUS, *Annals*, i, 74 (the "Informer" at Rome), and his *Life of Agricola*. *The Early Christian Persecutions* (*Translations and Reprints*, University of Pennsylvania, vol. iv, No. 1) (read Pliny's letter to Trajan and Trajan's reply). MARCUS AURELIUS, *Meditations*. Munro, *Source Book*, pp. 148-174, 217-234; Davis's *Readings* (Rome), pp. 186-290.

**References (Modern).** GIBBON, chap. ii, "Of the Union and Internal Prosperity of the Roman Empire in the Age of the Antonines." MOMMSEN, *The Provinces of the Roman Empire from Caesar to Diocletian*. PELHAM, *Outlines of Roman History*, pp. 470-548. DILL, *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius* (a notable book). FARRAR, *Seekers after God*. DAVIS, *The Influence of Wealth in Imperial Rome*. TUCKER, *Life in the Roman World of Nero and St. Paul*. MERIVALE, *History of the Romans under the Empire* (for general reference). RAMSAY, *The Church in the Roman Empire before A.D. 170*, chap. x, "Pliny's Report and Trajan's Rescript"; chap. xi, "The Action of Nero towards the Christians"; chap. xv, "Causes and Extent of Persecutions." BOISSIER, *Rome and Pompeii*, chap. vi, "Pompeii." WATSON, *Marcus Aurelius Antoninus*, chap. vii, "The Attitude of Aurelius towards Christianity." CAPES, *The Age of the Antonines* and *The Early Empire* (in this latter work read chap. xii, "The Position of the Emperor," and chap. xix, "The Revival of Religious Sentiment"). HARDY, *Christianity and the Roman Government* (a valuable study of the relations of the Christians to the imperial government during the first two centuries of the Empire).

**Topics for Class Reports.** 1. Pompeii and what we have learned of Roman life from its remains: Mau, *Pompeii: its Life and Art*. 2. Letters, books, and libraries: Johnston, *The Private Life of the Romans*, pp. 287-298. 3. An election campaign in Pompeii: Abbott, *Society and Politics in Ancient Rome*, pp. 3-21. 4. The Hadrian Wall in Britain: Bruce, *The Roman Wall*. 5. The spread of Christianity in the first two centuries: Friedländer, *Roman Life and Manners*, vol. iii, chap. ii, pp. 186-214. 6. The Catacombs: Lanciani, *Pagan and Christian Rome*, chap. vii. 7. Zenobia, "Queen of the East": Wright, *An Account of Palmyra and Zenobia*.

## II. THE ABSOLUTE MONARCHY

### CHAPTER IX

#### THE REIGNS OF DIOCLETIAN AND CONSTANTINE THE GREAT

##### I. THE REIGN OF DIOCLETIAN (284-305 A. D.)

**145. General Statement.** The accession of Diocletian marks an important era in the history of the Roman Empire. The two matters of chief importance connected with his reign are the changes he effected in the government and his persecution of the Christians.

Diocletian's governmental reforms, though radical, were salutary, and infused such fresh vitality into the frame of the dying state as to give it a new lease of life for a term of nearly two hundred years.

**146. The Empire becomes an Undisguised Oriental Monarchy.** Up to the time we have now reached, the really monarchical character of the government was more or less carefully concealed under the forms and names of the old Republic. Realizing that republican government among the Romans had passed away forever, and that its forms were now absolutely meaningless, Diocletian cast aside all the masks with which Augustus had concealed his practically unlimited power and which fear or policy had led his successors, with greater or less consistency, to retain, and let the government stand forth naked in the true character of what it had now become — an absolute Asiatic monarchy. In contrasting the policy of Augustus with that of Diocletian, Gibbon truly says: "It was the aim of the one to disguise, and the object of the other to display, the unbounded powers which the emperors possessed over the Roman world."

The change was marked by Diocletian's assumption of the titles of Asiatic royalty and his adoption of the court ceremonials and etiquette of the East. He took the title of *lord*, in Latin *dominus*,

whence this period of the absolute monarchy is sometimes called The Dominate. He clothed himself in magnificent robes of silk and gold. All who approached him, whether of low or of high rank, were required to prostrate themselves to the ground, a form of oriental and servile adoration which the free races of the West had hitherto, with manly disdain, refused to render to their magistrates and rulers.

The imperial household also now assumed a distinctively oriental character. Ostentation and extravagance marked all the appointments of the palace. Its apartments were crowded with retinues of servants and officers of every rank, and the person of the emperor was hedged around with all the "pomp and majesty of oriental monarchy."

The incoming of the absolute monarchy meant, of course, the last blow to local municipal freedom. The little liberty that still survived in the cities or municipalities of the Empire was virtually swept away. There was no place under the new government for any degree of genuine local independence and self-direction. Italy was now also reduced to a level in servitude with the provinces and was taxed and ruled like the other parts of the Empire.

**147. Changes in the Administrative System.** The century of anarchy which preceded the accession of Diocletian, and the death by assassination during this period of ten of the twenty-five wearers of the imperial purple,<sup>1</sup> had made manifest the need of a system which would discourage assassination and provide a regular mode of succession to the throne. Diocletian devised a system the aim of which was to compass both these ends. First, he chose as a colleague a companion ruler, Maximian, who, like himself, bore the title of Augustus. Then each of the co-emperors associated with himself an assistant, who took the title of Cæsar and was considered the son and heir of the emperor. There were thus two Augusti and two Cæsars. Milan, in Italy, became the capital and residence of Maximian; while Nicomedia, in Asia Minor, became the seat of the court of Diocletian. The Augusti took charge of the countries near their respective capitals, while the Cæsars — Galerius and Constantius — younger and more active, were assigned the government of the

<sup>1</sup> This enumeration does not include the so-called Thirty Tyrants, of whom many met death by violence.

more distant and turbulent provinces. The vigorous administration of the government in every quarter of the Empire was thus secured.

Diocletian also subdivided many of the provinces.<sup>1</sup> His purpose in doing this was to diminish the power of the provincial governors and thus make it impossible for them to raise successfully the standard of revolt.

To give still further security to the throne, Diocletian divided the civil and military powers, appointing two different sets of persons in each of the larger and smaller divisions of the state, the one set to represent the civil and the other the military authority.

Under the new régime the Senate was deprived of all share in imperial matters, and became merely a local body concerned only with the affairs of the city of Rome.

A most serious drawback to this system was the heavy expense involved in the maintenance of four courts with their endless retinues of officers and dependents, and the great number of officials needed to man and work the complicated system. It was complained that the number of those who received the revenues of the state was greater than that of those who contributed to them. The burden of taxation grew unendurable. Husbandry in some regions ceased, and great numbers were reduced to beggary or driven into brigandage. The curiales or members of the local senates were made responsible for the payment of the taxes due the government from their respective communities, and hence office-holding became not an honor to be coveted but a burden to be evaded. It was this vicious system of taxation which more than any other one cause contributed to the depopulation, impoverishment, and final downfall of the Empire.

**148. Growth of a Caste System.** To escape from the intolerable burdens many of the peasant farmers fled to the desert and became monks; others escaped across the frontiers and sought freedom among the barbarians. The well-to-do tried in every way to evade

<sup>1</sup> He increased the number from fifty-seven to ninety-six. His successor Constantine raised the number to one hundred sixteen. The provinces were gathered into larger divisions, called *dioceses*, which were apportioned among four great divisions of the Empire called *prefectures*. The prefectures were probably created by Constantine.

the burden of taxation and of office. To meet the situation the government adopted the policy of tying every one liable to taxation to his post or profession. The member of a municipal curia or senate was bound to his office and could not leave the city without permission; the colonus<sup>1</sup> or peasant farmer was attached to the land he worked and thus made a serf; the artisan was bound to his trade, the merchant to his business. Moreover, all offices, trades, and professions were, in so far as it was possible, made hereditary, children being forced to follow the occupation of their father.<sup>2</sup> Every one was to remain in the station in which he was born: the son of a member of a local senate must take his father's place; the son of a peasant must stay on the farm; the son of a soldier must be a soldier, and so on through all trades and occupations. Classes thus tended to become rigid hereditary castes. Personal liberty disappeared.

**149. The Imperial Court.** Perhaps we cannot better indicate the new relation to the Empire into which the head of the Roman state was brought by the innovations of Diocletian and his successor than by saying that the Empire now became the private estate of the sovereign and was managed just as any great Roman proprietor managed his domain. The imperial household and the entire civil service of the government were simply such a proprietor's domestic establishment drawn on a large scale and given an oriental cast through the influence of the courts of Asia.

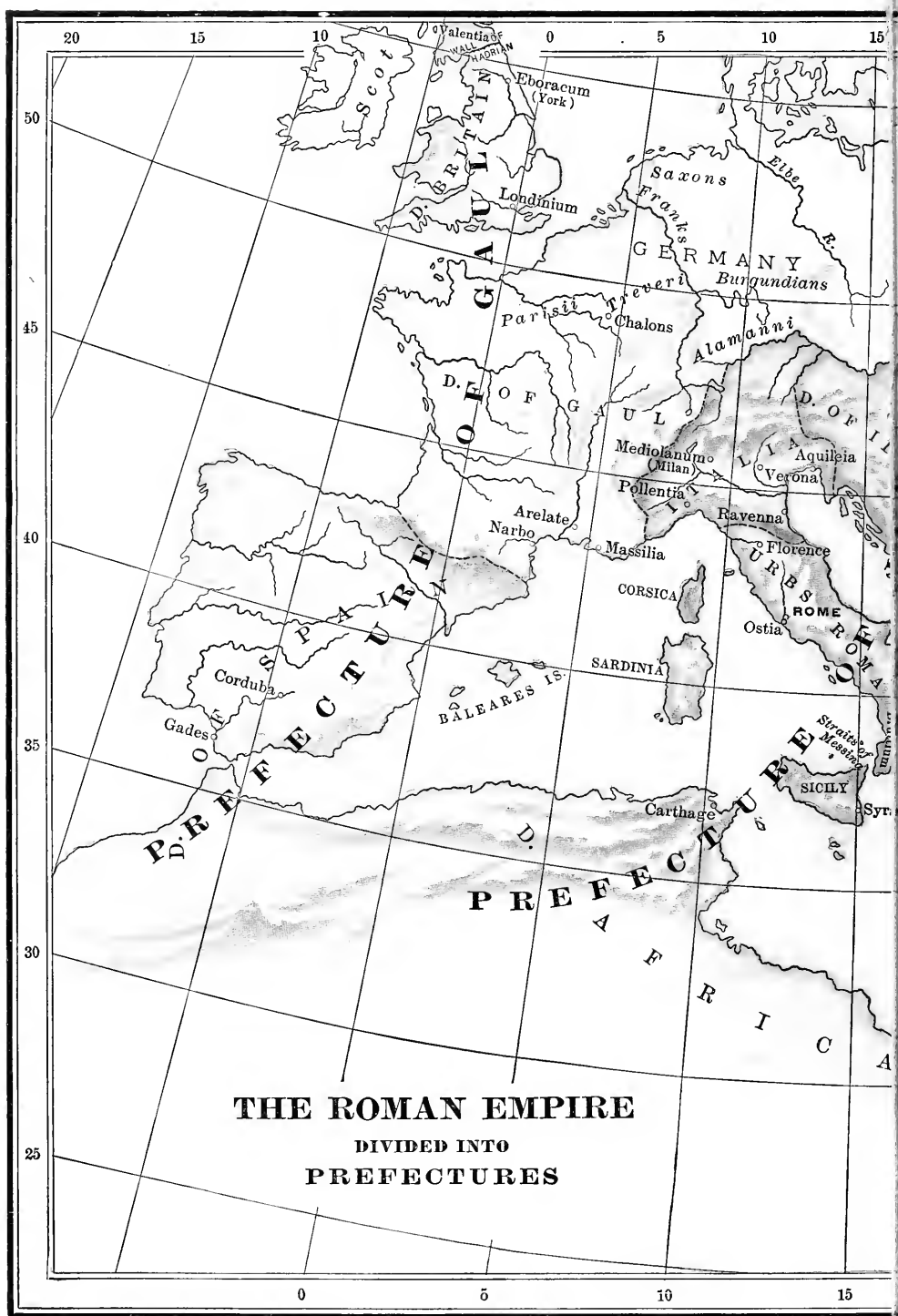
This imperial court or establishment was, next after the body of the Roman law and the municipal system, the most important historical product that the old Roman world transmitted to the later nations of Europe. It became the model of the court of Charlemagne and

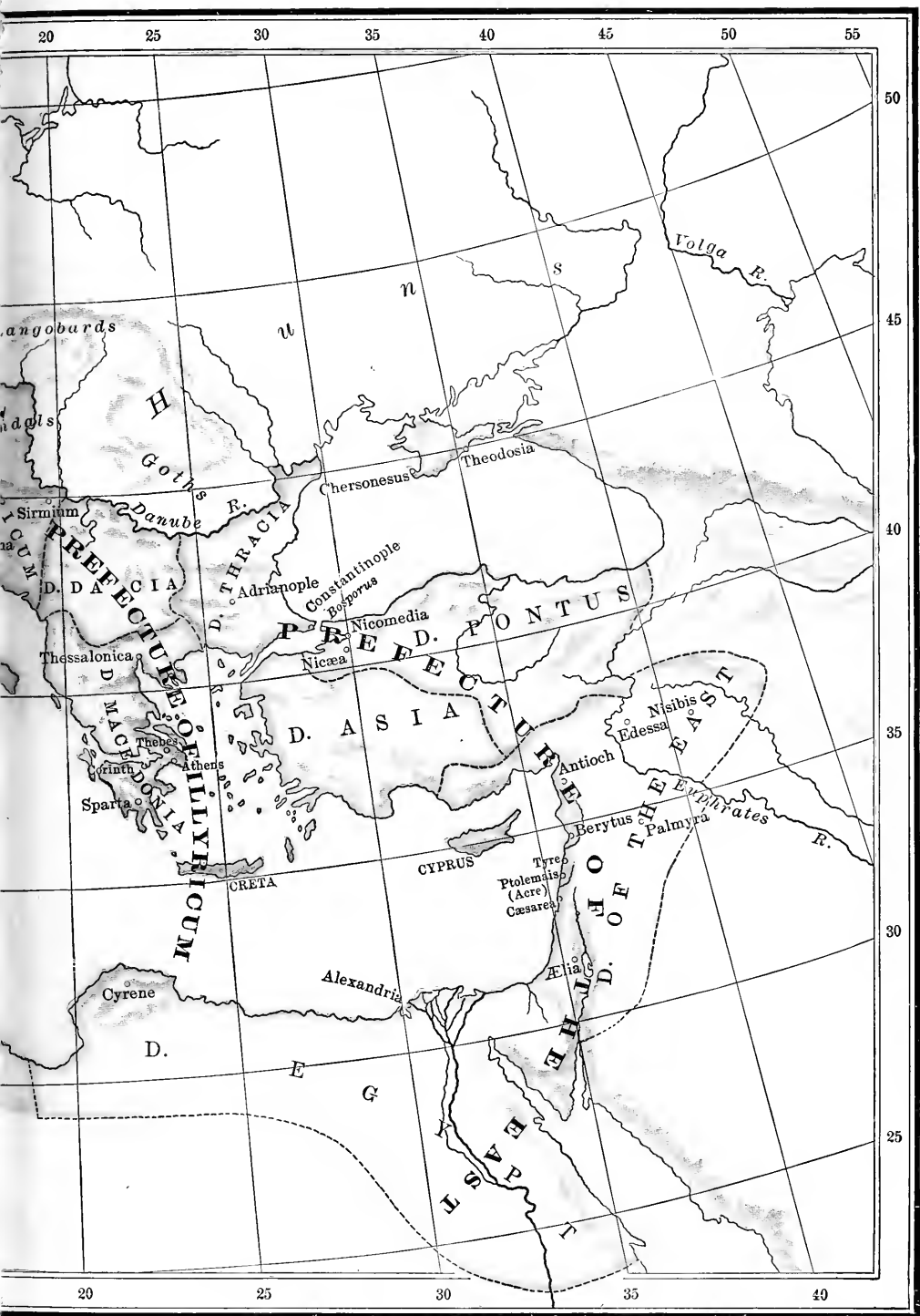
<sup>1</sup> The coloni (cultivators of the soil) were originally free peasants who tilled for a rent paid in money or in kind the imperial domains or the estates of great private landowners. By the third century of the Empire many of them, through debt and other causes, had sunk into a semiservile condition and had become virtually attached to the soil they tilled. This status was now, for the imperial reasons mentioned in the text, made the legal status of the class. We have here the beginnings of mediæval serfdom (see sect. 201).

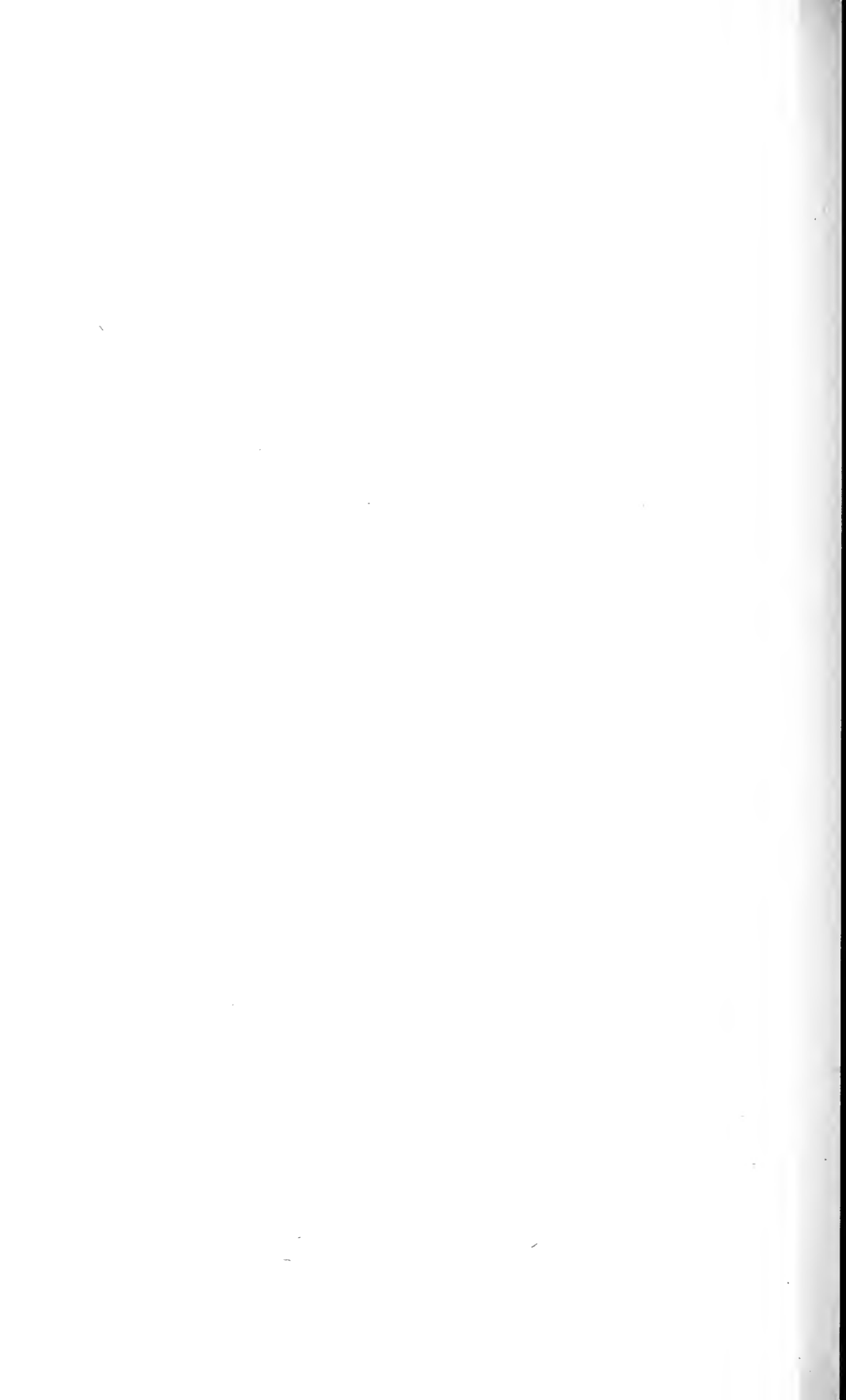
<sup>2</sup> This transformation of the society of the Empire was in process before the reign of Diocletian. The trade guilds that supplied necessities of life had already, in order to bring them more completely under the imperial control, been transformed into hereditary castes.











of the courts of the later emperors of the so-called Holy Roman Empire; and in the form that it reappeared here was copied by all the sovereigns of modern Europe.

**150. Persecution of the Christians.** Towards the end of his reign Diocletian inaugurated against the Christians a persecution which continued long after his abdication, and which was the severest, as it was the last, waged against the Church by the pagan emperors. The Christians were cast into dungeons, thrown to the wild beasts in the amphitheater, and put to death by every other mode of torture that ingenious cruelty could devise. But nothing could shake their constancy. They courted the death that secured them, as they believed, immediate entrance upon a life of unending happiness.

It was during this and the various other persecutions that vexed the Church in the second and third centuries that the Christians sometimes sought refuge in the Catacombs, those vast subterranean galleries and chambers under the city of Rome. Here they buried their dead, and on the walls of the chambers sketched rude symbols of their hope and faith. It was in the darkness of these subterranean abodes that Christian art had its beginnings.

**151. The Abdication of Diocletian.** After a reign of twenty years, becoming weary of the cares of state, Diocletian abdicated the throne and forced or induced his colleague Maximian also to lay down his authority on the same day. Galerius and Constantius were, by this act, advanced to the purple and made Augusti; and two new associates were appointed as Cæsars.

Diocletian then retired to his country seat at Salona, on the eastern shore of the Adriatic, and there devoted himself to rural pursuits. It is related that, when Maximian wrote him urging him to endeavor with him to regain the power they had laid aside, he replied, "Were you but to come to Salona and see the cabbages which I raise in my garden with my own hands, you would no longer talk to me of empire."



FIG. 40. CHRIST AS  
THE GOOD SHEPHERD  
(From the Catacombs)

## II. REIGN OF CONSTANTINE THE GREAT (306-337 A.D.)

**152. The Battle of the Milvian Bridge (312 A.D.); "In this Sign Conquer."** Galerius and Constantius, who became Augusti on the abdication of Diocletian and Maximian, had reigned together only one year when Constantius died at York, in Britain. His soldiers, disregarding the rule of succession as determined by the system of Diocletian, proclaimed his son Constantine emperor. Six competitors for the throne arose in different quarters. For eighteen years Constantine fought to gain the supremacy.

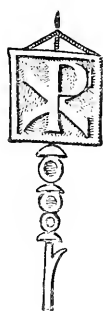


FIG. 41. THE  
LABARUM

One of the most important of the battles that took place between the contending rivals for the imperial purple was the battle of the Milvian Bridge, about two miles from Rome, in which Maxentius, who was holding Italy and Africa, was defeated by Constantine. Constantine's standard on this celebrated battlefield was the Christian cross. He had been led to adopt this emblem through the appearance, as once he prayed to the sun-god, of a cross over the setting sun, with the inscription upon it, "In this sign conquer."<sup>1</sup> Obedient unto the celestial vision, Constantine had at once made the cross his banner,<sup>2</sup> and it was beneath this new emblem that his soldiers marched to victory at the battle of the Milvian Bridge.

Whatever may have been the circumstances or the motives which led Constantine to make the cross his standard, this act of his constitutes a turning point in the history of the Christian Church. Christianity had come into the world as a religion of peace and good will. The Master had commanded his disciples to put up the sword. For two centuries and more, obedience to this command by a large body of his followers had been so implicit that a Quaker, nonmilitary spirit had throughout this period characterized the new sect. Some of

<sup>1</sup> *In hoc signo vince*; in Greek, *ἐν τούτῳ νίκα*.

<sup>2</sup> The new standard was called the *Labarum* (from the Celtic *lavar*, meaning "command"). It consisted of a banner inscribed with the Greek letters XP, the first being a symbol of the cross, and the two forming a monogram of the word *Christ*, since the letters are the initials of the Greek ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ (*Christos*).

the early Church Fathers taught that the profession of arms was incompatible with a true Christian life. But after the victory for the Cross at the Milvian Bridge a change passed over the Church. It leaned more and more upon earthly power, and became militant. This infusion into the Church of the military spirit of Rome was one of the most important consequences of the story of the miraculous cross in the sky, and of the espousal of the Christian cause by the emperor Constantine.

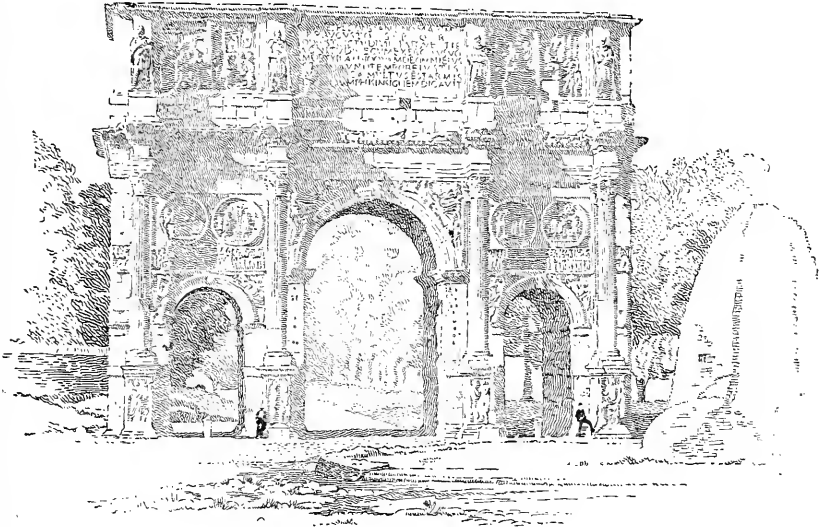


FIG. 42. ARCH OF CONSTANTINE AT ROME, AS IT APPEARS TO-DAY

Erected by the Roman Senate in commemoration of Constantine's victory over Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge

### 153. Constantine makes Christianity the Religion of the Court.

By a decree issued at Milan 313 A.D., the year after the battle at the Milvian Bridge, Constantine placed Christianity on an equal footing with the other religions of the Empire. The language of this famous edict of toleration, the Magna Charta, as it has been called, of the Church, was in import as follows: "We grant to Christians and to all others full liberty of following that religion which each may choose." "For the first time in history, the principle of universal toleration was [thus] officially laid down."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Cambridge Mediæval History*, vol. i, p. 5. An earlier edict of toleration by the emperor Galerius gave the Christians freedom of worship, but did not recognize the principle of *universal* toleration.

But by subsequent edicts Constantine made Christianity in effect the state religion and extended to it a patronage which he withheld from the old pagan worship. By the year 321 A.D. he had granted the Christian societies the right to receive gifts and legacies, and he himself enriched the Church with donations of money and grants of land. This marks the beginning of the great possessions of the Church, and with these the entrance into it of a worldly spirit. From this moment can be traced the decay of its primitive simplicity and a decline from its early high moral standard. It is these deplorable results of the imperial patronage that Dante laments in his well-known lines :

Ah, Constantine! of how much ill was mother,  
Not thy conversion, but that marriage dower  
Which the first wealthy Father took from thee!<sup>1</sup>

Another of Constantine's acts touching the new religion is of special historical interest and importance. He recognized the Christian Sunday as a day of rest, forbidding ordinary work on that day, and ordering that Christian soldiers be then permitted to attend the services of their Church. This recognition by the civil authority of the Christian Sabbath meant much for the slave. Now, for the first time in the history of the Indo-European peoples, the slave had one day of rest in each week. It was a good augury of the happier time coming when all the days should be his own.

**154. The Church Council of Nicæa (325 A.D.).** With the view of harmonizing the different sects that had sprung up among the Christians, and to settle the controversy between the Arians and the Athanasians<sup>2</sup> respecting the nature of Christ,—the former denied his equality with God the Father,—Constantine called the first ecumenical or general council of the Church at Nicæa, a town of Asia Minor, 325 A.D. Arianism was denounced, and a formula of Christian faith adopted which is known as the Nicene Creed.

<sup>1</sup> *Inferno*, xix, 115-117.

<sup>2</sup> The Arians were the followers of Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria in Egypt; the Athanasians, of Athanasius, archdeacon and later bishop of the same city, and the champion of the orthodox or Catholic view of the Trinity.



**155. Constantine Founds Constantinople, the New Rome, on the Bosphorus (330 A.D.).** After the recognition of Christianity, the most important act of Constantine was the selection of Byzantium, on the Bosphorus, as the new capital of the Empire. There were many and weighty reasons urging Constantine to establish a new capital in the East.

First, there were urgent military reasons for making the change. The most dangerous enemies of the Empire now were the barbarians behind the Danube and the kings of the recently restored Persian monarchy. This condition of things rendered almost necessary the establishment in the East of a new and permanent base for military operations, and pointed to Byzantium, with its admirable strategic position, as the site, above all others, adapted to the needs of the imperiled Empire.

Second, there were also commercial reasons for the transfer of the capital. Through the Roman conquest of Greece and Asia, the center of the population, wealth, and commerce of the Empire had shifted eastward. Now, of all the cities in the East, Byzantium was the one most favorably situated to become the commercial metropolis of the enlarged state.

But far outweighing all other reasons for the removal to the East of the chief seat of the government were the political motives. Constantine, like Diocletian, wished to establish a system of government modeled upon the despotic monarchy of the Orient. Now, the traditions, the feelings, the temper of the people of the West constituted the very worst foundation conceivable for such a political system. Constantine wisely determined to seek in the submissive and servile populations of the East, always accustomed to the rendering of obsequious homage to their rulers, a firm base for the structure of that absolute monarchy proclaimed by his predecessor Diocletian.

The location for the new capital having been decided upon, the artistic and material resources of the whole Græco-Roman world were called into requisition to create upon the spot a city worthy its predestined fortunes. The imperial invitation and the attractions of the court induced multitudes to crowd into the new capital, so that almost in a day the old Byzantium grew into a great city. In

honor of the emperor the name was changed to Constantinople, the "City of Constantine." The old Rome on the Tiber, emptied of its leading inhabitants, soon sank to the obscure position of a provincial town.<sup>1</sup>

**156. Pagan Restoration under Julian the Apostate (361-363 A.D.).**

A troubled period of nearly a quarter of a century followed the death of Constantine the Great, and then the imperial scepter came into the hands of Julian, called the Apostate because he abandoned Christianity and labored to restore the pagan worship. In his earlier years Julian had been carefully nurtured in the doctrines of the new religion; but later, in the schools of Athens and of other cities where he pursued his studies, he came under the influence of pagan teachers, and his faith in Christian doctrines was undermined, while at the same time he conceived a great admiration for the culture of ancient Hellas.

Julian, in his efforts to restore paganism, did not resort to the old means of persuasion, — "the sword, the fire, the lions," — for the reason that, under the softening influences of the very faith Julian sought to extirpate, the Roman world had already become imbued with a gentleness and humanity that rendered morally impossible the renewal of the Neronian and Diocletian persecutions. Julian's chief weapon was the pen, for he was a writer and satirist of no mean talent.

It was in vain that the apostate emperor labored to uproot the new faith; for the purity of its teachings, the universal and eternal character of its moral precepts, had given it a name to live. Equally in vain were his efforts to restore the worship of the old Greek and Roman divinities. Polytheism was a form of religious belief which the world had now outgrown: great Pan was dead.

The disabilities under which Julian had placed the Christians were removed by his successor Jovian (363-364 A.D.). In the army the old pagan standards were replaced by the Labarum, and Christianity was again made the religion of the imperial court.

<sup>1</sup> It should be borne in mind that the old Rome had already been in a measure deposed from its imperial position by Diocletian, and Milan made the residence of the subordinate emperor. But Constantine, by the founding of the new capital in the East, made the deposition politically and socially complete and final.

**Selections from the Sources.** *Translations and Reprints*, University of Pennsylvania, vol. iv, No. 1 (read "Edicts of Diocletian" and "Edict of Toleration by Galerius"). Munro's *Source Book*, pp. 174-176, 235, 236; Davis's *Readings* (Rome), pp. 291-296.

**References (Modern).** MILMAN, *The History of Christianity*, vol. ii, bk. ii, chap. ix, "The Persecution under Diocletian." GIBBON, chap. xv, "The Progress of the Christian Religion and the Sentiments, Numbers, and Condition of the Primitive Christians"; chap. xvii (on the founding of Constantinople and the form of the government). BURY, *Later Roman Empire*, vol. i, bk. i, chap. iv. PELHAM, *Outlines of Roman History*, pp. 551-559. UHLHORN, *Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism*, bk. iii, chaps. i-iii. BOISSIER, *Rome and Pompeii*, chap. iii, "The Catacombs." FIRTH, *Constantine the Great*. STANLEY, *Lectures on the History of the Eastern Church*, lects. ii-v (for the history of the Council of Nicæa, 325 B.C.); lect. vi (for events concerning the Church during the reign of the emperor Constantine). SEELEY, *Roman Imperialism*, lect. iii, "The Later Empire." LANCIANI, *Pagan and Christian Rome*, chap. i. NEWMAN, *The Arians of the Fourth Century*, chap. iii, "The Ecumenical Council of Nicæa." *The Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. i, chaps. i-vii.

**Topics for Class Reports.** 1. Motives underlying the Diocletian persecution of the Christians: Mason, *The Persecution of Diocletian*, chap. iii. 2. The Council of Nicæa: Carr, *The Church and the Roman Empire*, chap. v. 3. The founding of Constantinople: Oman, *The Byzantine Empire*, pp. 13-30. 4. Julian and the pagan restoration: Carr, *The Church and the Roman Empire*, chap. vii; Gardner, *Julian the Philosopher, and the last Struggle of Paganism against Christianity*. 5. Efforts of Diocletian to fix prices of provisions and wares: Abbott, *The Common People of Ancient Rome*, pp. 145-178.

## CHAPTER X

### THE BREAK-UP OF THE EMPIRE IN THE WEST

(376-476 A.D.)

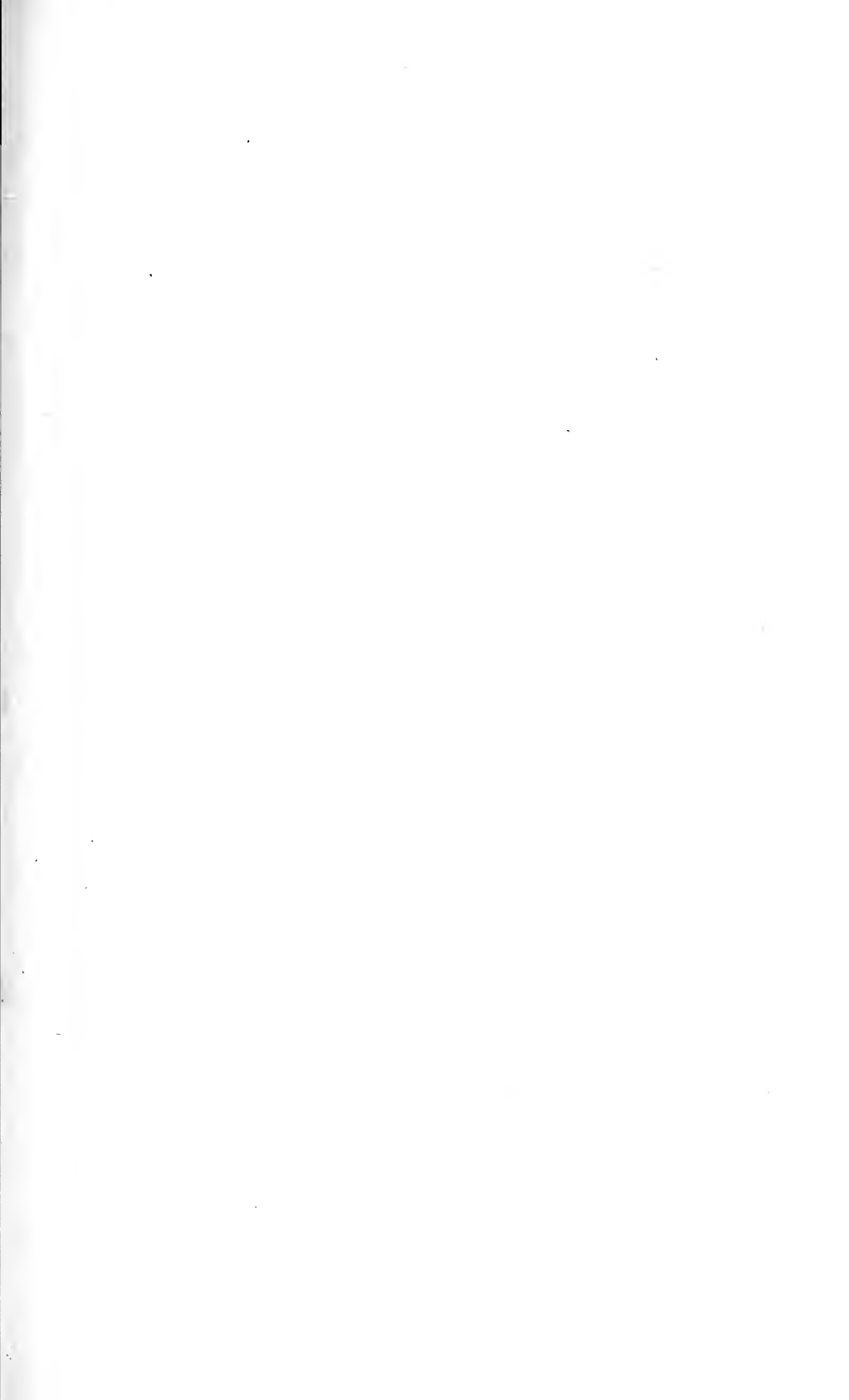
**157. Introductory: the Germans and Christianity.** The two most vital elements in the Græco-Roman world of the fifth century were the German barbarians and Christianity. They had, centuries before this, as we have seen, come into certain relations to the Roman government and to Roman life; but during the period lying immediately before us they assumed an altogether new historical interest and importance.

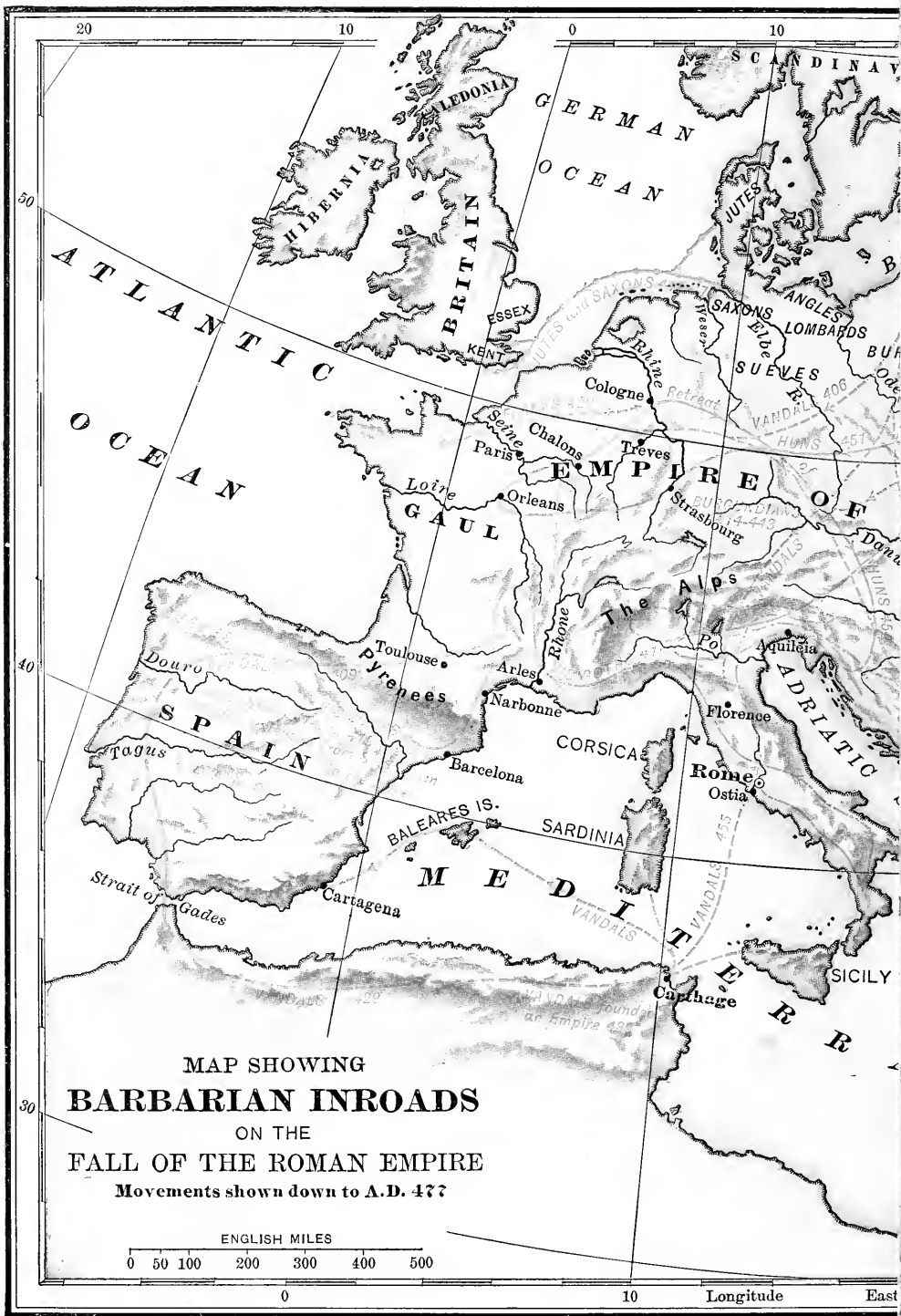
The two main matters, then, which will claim our attention during the century yet remaining for our study will be (1) the struggle between the dying Empire and the young German races of the North; and (2) the final triumph of Christianity, through the aid of the temporal power, over expiring paganism.

**158. The Goths Cross the Danube (376 A.D.).** The year 376 of the Christian era marks an event of the greatest importance in the East. The Visigoths (Western Goths) dwelling north of the Lower Danube appeared as suppliants in vast multitudes upon its banks. They said that a terrible race, whom they were powerless to withstand, had invaded their territories and spared neither their homes nor their lives. They begged permission of the emperor Valens<sup>1</sup> to cross the river and settle in Thrace, and promised, should this request be granted, ever to remain the grateful and firm allies of the Roman state. Their petition was granted on condition that they surrender their arms and give up their children as hostages.

The enemy that had so terrified the Visigoths were the Huns, a monstrous race of fierce nomadic horsemen from the vast steppes of

<sup>1</sup> Valens (364-378 A.D.) was emperor of the East. Valentinian (364-375 A.D.), emperor in the West, had just died, and been succeeded by Gratian (375-383 A.D.).











Asia. Scarcely had the fugitives been received within the limits of the Empire before a large company of their kinsmen, the Ostrogoths (Eastern Goths), also driven from their homes by the same terrible enemy, crowded to the banks of the Danube and pleaded that they also might be allowed to place the river between themselves and their dreaded foe. But Valens, becoming alarmed at the presence of so many barbarians within his dominions, refused their request, whereupon they crossed the river with arms in their hands.

Once within the Empire they, joined by their Visigothic kinsmen, soon began to overrun and ravage the Danubian provinces. Valens dispatched swift messengers to Gratian, emperor in the West, asking for assistance; but without awaiting the arrival of the Western legions he imprudently risked a battle with the barbarians near Adrianople. The Roman army was almost annihilated and Valens himself was killed (378 A.D.).

Gratian was hurrying to the help of his colleague Valens when news of his death was brought to him. He at once appointed as his associate Theodosius (379–395 A.D.), known afterwards as the Great, and intrusted him with the government of the East. Theodosius quickly reduced the Goths to submission. Great multitudes of them were settled upon the waste lands of Thrace, while more than forty thousand of these warlike barbarians, the destined subverters of the Empire, were enlisted in the imperial legions.

**159. The Prohibition of the Pagan Cults.** Both Gratian and Theodosius were zealous champions of the orthodox Church, and a large portion of the edicts issued during their joint reign had for aim the uprooting of heresy or the suppression of the pagan worship. (Speaking generally, from the accession of Constantine down to the time which we have now reached, the pagans had been allowed full liberty of worship.) At first the pagans were merely placed under certain disabilities, but finally it was made a crime for any one to practice any pagan cult, or even to enter a temple. The sacred fire which had burned so long on the national hearth in the temple of Vesta (sect. 17) was extinguished. In the year 392 A.D. even the private worship of the Lares and Penates was prohibited. The struggle between Christianity and heathenism was now virtually ended — and

the "Galilean" had conquered. Pagan rites, however, especially in the country districts, were practiced secretly long after this.

**160. Emperor Theodosius the Great and Bishop Ambrose of Milan.**

A memorable incident, illustrative of the influence of the new religion that was now fast taking the place of paganism, marks the reign of Theodosius the Great. In a sedition caused by the arrest and imprisonment of a favorite charioteer, the people of Thessalonica, in Macedonia, had murdered the general and several officers of the imperial garrison in that place. When intelligence of the event reached Theodosius, who was at Milan, his hasty temper broke through all restraint, and, moved by a spirit of savage vengeance, he ordered an indiscriminate slaughter of the inhabitants of Thessalonica. The command was obeyed and at least seven thousand persons perished.

Shortly after the massacre, the emperor, as he was entering the door of the cathedral at Milan where he was wont to worship, was met at the threshold by the pious Bishop Ambrose, who, in the name of the God of justice and mercy, forbade him to enter the sacred place until he had done public penance for his awful crime. The commander of all the Roman legions was constrained to obey the unarmed pastor. In penitential garb and attitude Theodosius made public confession of his sin and humbly underwent the penance imposed by the Church.

This passage of history is noteworthy as marking a stage in the moral progress of humanity. It made manifest how with Christianity a new moral force had entered the world, how a sort of new and universal tribunician authority (see sect. 31) had arisen in society to interpose, in the name of justice and humanity, between the weak and defenseless and their self-willed and arbitrary rulers.

**161. Final Administrative Division of the Empire (395 A.D.).**

Upon the death of Theodosius, in 395 A.D., the imperial government, as he had prearranged, was divided between his two sons, Arcadius and Honorius. Arcadius, who was only eighteen years of age, received the government of the East, and Honorius, still a mere child of eleven, the government of the West. This division was in no way different from those that had been repeatedly made since the

time of Diocletian, and was not to affect the unity of the Empire. But so different was the trend of events in the two halves of the old Empire from this time on that the historians of Rome have generally allowed this division of the imperial rule to constitute a dividing line in the history of the Empire, and have begun here to trace separately the story of each part.

**162. The Empire in the East.**<sup>1</sup> The story of the fortunes of the Empire in the East need not detain us long here. The line of Eastern emperors lasted over a thousand years—until the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, 1453 A.D. It will thus be seen that the greater part of its history belongs to the mediæval period. Up to the time of the dissolution of the Empire in the West the emperors of the East were engaged almost incessantly in suppressing uprisings of their Gothic allies or mercenaries, or in repelling invasions of different barbarian tribes.

**163. First Invasion of Italy by Alaric (402–403 A.D.).** Only a few years had elapsed after the death of the great Theodosius before the barbarians were trooping in vast hordes through all parts of the Empire. First, from Thrace and Mœsia came the Visigoths, led by the great Alaric. They poured through the Pass of Thermopylæ and devastated almost the entire peninsula of Greece; but being driven from that country by Stilicho, the renowned Vandal general of Honorius, they crossed the Julian Alps and spread terror throughout Italy. Stilicho followed the barbarians cautiously, and, attacking them at a favorable moment, inflicted upon them a memorable defeat in northern Italy. The captured camp was found filled with the spoils of Thebes, Corinth, and Sparta. After an attempt to seize Rome by a sudden dash, which was thwarted by the vigilant Stilicho, Alaric withdrew from Italy through the defiles of the Alps.

**164. Last Triumph at Rome (404 A.D.).** A terrible danger had been averted. All Italy burst forth in expressions of gratitude and joy. The days of the Cimbri and Teutons were recalled, and the name of Stilicho was coupled with that of Marius (sect. 90). A magnificent triumph at Rome celebrated the victory. It was the last triumph that Rome ever saw. Three hundred times—such is

<sup>1</sup> For the proper use of this phrase "Empire *in* the East," see below, p. 225, n. 1.

asserted to be the number — the Imperial City had witnessed the triumphal procession of her victorious generals, celebrating conquests in all quarters of the world.<sup>1</sup>

**165. Last Gladiatorial Combat of the Amphitheater.** The same year that marks the last military triumph at Rome signalizes also the last gladiatorial combat in the Roman amphitheater. It is to Christianity that the credit of the suppression of these inhuman exhibitions is entirely, or almost entirely, due. The pagan philosophers usually regarded them with indifference, often with favor. Thus Pliny commends a friend for giving a gladiatorial entertainment at the funeral of his wife. They were defended on the ground that they fostered a martial spirit among the people and inured the soldiers to the sights of the battlefield. Hence gladiatorial games were sometimes actually exhibited to the legions before they set out on their campaigns.

But the Christian Fathers denounced the combats as immoral, and labored in every possible way to create a public opinion against them. At length, in 325 A.D., the first imperial edict against them was issued by Constantine. From this time forward the exhibitions were under something of a ban, until their final abolition was brought about by an incident of the games that closed the triumph of Honorius. In the midst of the exhibition a Christian monk named Telemachus, leaping into the arena, rushed between the combatants, but was instantly killed by a shower of missiles thrown by the people, who were angered by his interruption of their sport. The people, however, soon repented of their act; and Honorius himself, who was present, was moved by the scene. Christianity had awakened the conscience and touched the heart of Rome. The martyrdom of the monk led to an imperial edict "which abolished forever the human sacrifices of the amphitheater."

**166. The Ransom of Rome (409 A.D.).** Shortly after the victories of Stilicho over the German barbarians,<sup>1</sup> he came under the suspicion of the weak and jealous Honorius, and was executed. Thus fell the

<sup>1</sup> Soon after the Gothic invasion of the year 403, Italy was again invaded by a mixed German host led by a chieftain named Radagaisus. At Florence the barbarians were surrounded by the Roman army under Stilicho and forced to surrender.

great general whose sword and counsel had twice saved Rome from the barbarians, and who might again have averted similar dangers already at hand; for just now the thirty thousand Gothic mercenaries in the Roman service were incited to revolt by the massacre, at the hands of Italian mobs, of their wives and children, who were held as hostages in the different cities of Italy. The Goths beyond the Alps joined their kinsmen to avenge the atrocious deed. Alaric again crossed the mountains and led his hosts to the very gates of Rome. Not since the time of the dread Hannibal (sect. 66) — more than six hundred years before this — had Rome been insulted by the presence of a foreign foe beneath her walls.

Famine soon forced the Romans to sue for terms of surrender. The ambassadors of the Senate, when they came before Alaric, began, in lofty language, to warn him not to render the Romans desperate by hard or dishonorable terms: their fury when driven to despair, they represented, was terrible, and their number enormous. "The thicker the grass, the easier to mow it," was Alaric's derisive reply. The barbarian chieftain at length named the ransom that he would accept and spare the city. Small as it was, comparatively, the Romans were able to raise it only by the most extraordinary measures. The images of the gods were first stripped of their ornaments of gold and precious stones, and finally the statues themselves were melted down.

**167. Sack of Rome by Alaric (410 A.D.).** Upon retiring from Rome, Alaric established his camp in Etruria. The chieftain now demanded for his followers lands of Honorius, who, with his court, was safe behind the marshes of Ravenna; but the emperor treated all the proposals of the barbarian with foolish insolence.

Rome paid the penalty. Alaric turned upon the city, resolved upon its plunder. The barbarians broke into the capital by night, "and the inhabitants were awakened by the tremendous sound of the Gothic trumpet." Just eight hundred years had passed since its sack by the Gauls (sect. 40). Now it is given over for the second time as a spoil to barbarians. Alaric commanded his soldiers to spare the lives of the people, and to leave untouched the treasures of the Christian churches; but the wealth of the citizens

he permitted them to make their own. It was a rich booty with which they loaded their wagons, for within the palace of the Cæsars and the homes of the wealthy were gathered the riches of a plundered world.

**168. Effects of the Disaster upon Paganism.** The overwhelming disaster that had befallen the Imperial City produced a profound impression upon both pagans and Christians throughout the Roman Empire. The pagans maintained that these unutterable calamities had overtaken the Roman people because of their abandonment of the worship of the gods of their forefathers, under whose protection and favor Rome had become the mistress of the world.

The Christians, on the other hand, saw in the fall of the city the fulfillment of the prophecies of their Scriptures against the Babylon of the Apocalypse. It was this interpretation of the appalling calamity that gained credit amidst the panic and despair of the times. "Henceforth," says the historian Merivale, "the power of paganism was entirely broken, and the indications which occasionally meet us of its continued existence are rare and trifling. Christianity stepped into its deserted inheritance."

**169. The Death of Alaric (410 A.D.).** After withdrawing his warriors from Rome, Alaric led them southward. As they moved slowly on, they piled still higher the wagons of their long trains with the rich spoils of the cities and villas of Campania and other districts of southern Italy. In the villas of the Roman nobles the barbarians spread rare banquets from the stores of their well-filled cellars, and drank from jeweled cups the famed Falernian wine.

Alaric's designs of conquest in Africa were frustrated by his death, which occurred 410 A.D. Tradition tells how, with religious care, his followers secured the body of their hero against molestation. The little river Busentinus, in northern Bruttium, was turned from its course with great labor, and in the bed of the stream was constructed a tomb, in which was placed the body of the king, with his jewels and trophies. The river was then restored to its old channel, and, that the exact spot might never be known, the prisoners who had been forced to do the work were all put to death.

**170. The Disintegration of the Empire and the Beginnings of the Barbarian Kingdoms (410-451 A.D.).**<sup>1</sup> We must now turn our eyes from Rome and Italy in order to watch the movement of events in the Western provinces of the Empire. During the forty years following the sack of Rome by Alaric, the German tribes seized the greater part of these provinces and established in them what are known as the barbarian kingdoms.

The Goths who had pillaged Rome and Italy, after the death of their great chieftain Alaric, under the lead of his successors, recrossed the Alps, and establishing their camps in the south of Gaul and the north of Spain, set up finally in those regions what is known as the Kingdom of the Visigoths or West Goths (sect. 203).

While the Goths were making these migrations and settlements, a kindred but less civilized tribe, the Vandals, moving from their seat in Pannonia, traversed Gaul, crossed the Pyrenees into Spain, and there occupied for a time a large tract of country, which in its present name of *Andalusia* preserves the memory of its barbarian settlers. Then they crossed the straits of Gibraltar, overthrew the Roman authority in all North Africa, and made Carthage the seat of a dreaded corsair empire (sect. 204).

About this same time the Burgundians established themselves in southeastern Gaul. A portion of the region occupied by these settlers still retains from them the name of *Burgundy*.

Meanwhile the Franks, who about a century before the sack of Rome by Alaric had made their first settlement in Roman territory west of the Rhine, were increasing in numbers and in authority, and were laying the foundation of what after the fall of Rome was to become known as the Kingdom of the Franks — the beginning of the French nation of to-day (sect. 205).

But the most important of all the settlements of the barbarians was being made in the remote province of Britain. In his efforts to defend Italy against her barbarian invaders, Stilicho had withdrawn the last legion from Britain, and had thus left unguarded the Hadrian Wall in the north (sect. 138) and the long coast line facing

<sup>1</sup> We choose these dates for the reason that they set off the interval between two great events — the sack of Rome by Alaric and the battle of Châlons (sect. 171).

the continent. The Picts of Caledonia, taking advantage of the withdrawal of the guardians of the province, swarmed over the unsentined rampart and pillaged the fields and towns of the south. The half-Romanized and effeminate provincials — no match for their hardy kinsmen who had never bowed their necks to the yoke of Rome — were driven to despair by the ravages of their relentless enemies, and, in their helplessness, invited to their aid the Angles and Saxons from the shores of the North Sea. These people came



FIG. 43. GERMANS CROSSING THE RHINE. (After a drawing by Alphonse de Neuville)

in their rude boats, drove back the invaders, and, being pleased with the soil and climate of the island, took possession of the country for themselves and became the ancestors of the English people.

**171. Invasion of the Huns; Battle of Châlons (451 A.D.).** The barbarians who were thus overrunning and parceling out the inheritance of the dying Empire were now in turn pressed upon and terrified by a foe more hideous and dreadful in their eyes than they themselves were in the eyes of the Roman provincials. These were the Mongol Huns, from the region northwest of China, of whom we have already caught a glimpse as they drove the panic-stricken Goths



across the Danube (sect. 158). At this time their leader was Attila, whom the affrighted inhabitants of Europe called the "Scourge of God." It was Attila's boast that the grass never grew again where once the hoof of his horse had trod.

Attila defeated the armies of the Eastern emperor and exacted tribute from the court of Constantinople. Finally he turned westward, and, at the head of a host numbering, it is asserted, seven hundred thousand warriors, crossed the Rhine into Gaul, purposing first to ravage that province and then to traverse Italy with fire and sword, in order to destroy the last vestige of the Roman power. The Romans and their German conquerors united to make common cause against the common enemy. The Visigoths rallied about their king, Theodoric; the Italians, the Franks, and the Burgundians flocked to the standard of the Roman general Aëtius.<sup>1</sup> Attila drew up his mighty hosts upon the plain of Châlons, in the north of Gaul, and there awaited the onset of the Romans and their allies. The conflict was long and terrible, but at last fortune turned against the barbarians, whose losses were enormous. Attila succeeded in escaping from the field and retreated with his shattered hosts across the Rhine.

This great victory is placed among the significant events of history; for it decided that the Indo-European folk, and not the Mongolian Huns, should inherit the dominions of the expiring Roman Empire and control the destinies of Europe.

**172. Attila Threatens Rome; his Death (453 ? A.D.).** The year after his defeat at Châlons, Attila crossed the Alps and burned or plundered all the important cities of northern Italy. The Veneti fled for safety to the morasses at the head of the Adriatic (452 A.D.). Upon the islets where they built their rude dwellings there grew up in time the city of Venice, "the eldest daughter of the Roman Empire," the "Carthage of the Middle Ages."

The barbarians threatened Rome; but Leo the Great, bishop of the capital, went with an embassy to the camp of Attila and pleaded for the city. He recalled to the mind of Attila how death had overtaken the impious Alaric soon after he had given the Imperial City

<sup>1</sup> Aëtius has been called "the last of the Romans." For twenty years previous to this time he had been the upholder of the imperial authority in Gaul.

as a spoil to his warriors, and warned him not to call down upon himself the like judgment of Heaven. Attila was induced to spare the city and to lead his warriors back beyond the Alps. Shortly after he had crossed the Danube he died suddenly in his camp, and like Alaric was buried secretly.

**173. Sack of Rome by the Vandals (455 A.D.).** Rome had been saved a visitation from the spoiler of the North, but a new destruction was about to burst upon it by way of the sea from the South. Africa sent out another enemy whose greed for plunder proved more fatal to Rome than the eternal hate of Hannibal. The kings of the Vandal empire in North Africa had acquired as perfect a supremacy in the Western Mediterranean as Carthage ever enjoyed in the days of her commercial pride. Vandal corsairs swept the seas and harassed all the shore-lands. In the year 455 a Vandal fleet led by the dread Geiseric sailed up the Tiber.

Panic seized the people, for the name *Vandal* was pronounced with terror throughout the world. Again the great Leo, who had once before saved his flock from the fury of Attila, went forth to intercede in the name of Christ for the Imperial City. Geiseric granted to the pious bishop the lives of the citizens, but said that the movable property of the capital belonged to his warriors. For fourteen days and nights the city was given over to the barbarians. The ships of the Vandals, which almost hid with their number the waters of the Tiber, were piled, as had been the wagons of the Goths before them, with the rich and weighty spoils of the capital. Palaces were stripped of their furniture, and the walls of the temples denuded of the trophies of a hundred Roman victories.<sup>1</sup> From the Capitoline sanctuary were borne off the golden candlestick and other sacred things that Titus had stolen from the temple at Jerusalem<sup>2</sup> (sect. 133).

The greed of the barbarians was sated at last, and they were ready to withdraw. The Vandal fleet sailed for Carthage, bearing, besides

<sup>1</sup> It would seem that, in some instances at least, after the closing of the temples to the pagan worship, many of the sacred things, such as war trophies, were left undisturbed in the edifices where they had been placed during pagan times.

<sup>2</sup> "The golden candlestick reached the African capital, was recovered a century later, and lodged in Constantinople by Justinian, and by him replaced, from superstitious motives, in Jerusalem. From that time its history is lost." — MERIVALE

the plunder of the city, more than thirty thousand of the inhabitants as slaves. Carthage, through her own barbarian conquerors, was at last avenged upon her hated rival. The mournful presentiment of Scipio had fallen true (sect. 81). The cruel fate of Carthage might have been read again in the pillaged city that the Vandals left behind them.

**174. Last Act in the Break-up of the Empire in the West (476 A. D.).**

Only the shadow of the Empire in the West now remained. The provinces of Gaul, Spain, and Africa were in the hands of the Franks, the Goths, the Vandals, and various other intruding tribes. Italy, as well as Rome herself, had become again and again the spoil of the barbarians. The story of the twenty years following the sack of the capital by Geiseric affords only a repetition of the events we have been narrating. During these years several puppet emperors were set up by army leaders. The last was a child of only six years. By what has been called a freak of fortune this boy-sovereign bore the name of Romulus Augustus, thus uniting in the name of the last Roman emperor of the West the names of the founder of Rome and the establisher of the Empire. He became known as Augustulus, the "little Augustus." He reigned only one year, when Odoacer, the leader of a small German tribe, dethroned the child-emperor.

The Roman Senate now sent to Constantinople an embassy to represent to the Eastern emperor Zeno that the West was willing to give up its claims to an emperor of its own,<sup>1</sup> and to request that the German chief, with the title of *patrician*, might rule Italy as his viceroy. With this rank and title Odoacer assumed the government of the peninsula. Thus Italy, while remaining nominally a part of the Empire, became in reality an independent barbarian kingdom, like those which had already been set up in the other countries of the West. The transaction marks not only the end of the line of Western Roman emperors, but also the virtual extinction of the Roman imperial rule in the western provinces of the old Empire — the culmination of a century-long process of dissolution.

<sup>1</sup> There was an exiled emperor of the West, Julius Nepos, living at Salona. He was ignored by Odoacer.

**175. Summary of the Causes of the Failure of the Empire.** It has been said that the Empire perished for lack of men. It is, in truth, a well-attested fact that, particularly in the later period of the Empire, there was a steady decline in the population. This resulted from many causes, some of which had been at work from the time of the later Republic. Prominent among these agencies were slavery (later, serfdom), an oppressive tax system, terrible pestilences, like that which visited the Empire in the reign of Marcus Aurelius (sect. 139), and, above all, the destruction of the flower of the Italian race in the wars, civil and foreign, which make up so large a part of the history of Rome.

But a more potent cause of the weakness of the Empire than this decline in the number of men was the general decline in public spirit and in the intellectual and moral vigor of the Roman people. The generally assigned causes of this moral decadence are many and cannot be dwelt upon here. We must be content with simply emphasizing its deep significance for the political fortunes of the Empire. It sapped the very foundations of the state and made certain the final catastrophe.

Another cause of the decay of the Empire was the decay of that free farmer class which was the strength of early Rome. This downward movement of the rural population began in the republican period. It was caused largely by the monopolization of the land by a few persons. All the efforts of the statesmen of the later Republic, all the devices of the emperors, to remedy this evil and to re-create in Italy and in the provinces a body of free peasant proprietors, had effected very little. In the third century after Christ, as in the second century before, the great masses who turned the soil had not a clod they could call their own. They had become serfs, that is, laborers living in a semiservile condition on the estates of the great landowners or on the imperial domains. There they had become merged with the earlier slave class and had naturally sunk to the intellectual and moral level of that class. The weakening effect upon the Empire of this virtual enslavement, and the resulting degradation of the once free peasantry of Italy and of the Western provinces cannot be overrated.

Contributing in like manner to the failure of the Empire was the ruin and disappearance of the middle class of society. How the growing needs of the imperial government led to the laying of ever-heavier burdens upon this order, and how withering were the effects of this policy, has already been explained (sect. 147). "It was to the conversion of the curiales into an hereditary caste, loaded with incalculable liabilities, that the decay of the Western Empire was to a large extent due."<sup>1</sup>

Another contributing cause of the fatal weakness of the imperial government was the Germanization of the Empire. As early as the second century A.D. the policy of permitting barbarians to settle in the empty provinces was adopted by the emperors. Multitudes of barbarian prisoners were settled as coloni or serfs on the waste land along the frontiers. By the fifth century a considerable part of the inhabitants of the Empire were Germans. Now these barbarian settlers brought in an anti-Roman spirit, and especially a spirit of personal freedom, which was directly opposed to the absolutism of the Roman imperial government. When their kinsmen came as invaders and conquerors they welcomed them as deliverers.

At the same time that the civil population of the Empire was being thus Germanized, the army was in like manner being transformed. The growing dislike among the Italians of the military service brought it about that the army was recruited more and more from among the Germans beyond the frontiers. The ranks were filled with barbarians or semibarbarians, and leaders among them like Stilicho and Odoacer gained as commanders the place once held by the Fabii and the Scipios. This transformation of the army could have no other outcome than what we have seen to be the issue of it all — the entrance into the legions of an un-Roman spirit and the final seizure of the reins of government by disaffected or ambitious leaders of the mutinous soldiers.

Still another reason of the breakdown of the Empire was the lack of a rule of succession to the throne. The imperial crown never became hereditary or regularly elective. Generally the successful aspirant for the imperial dignity reached the throne through violent or

<sup>1</sup> Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius* (1904), p. 213.

irregular means. The throne never became buttressed by what constitutes the strength of a monarchical government — the sentiment of loyalty to a legitimate dynasty.

Again, lack of unity in the Empire contributed largely to its weakness and failure. Rome had reached out too far and embraced too much. She could not absorb and assimilate the diverse races, creeds, and civilizations included in her extended frontiers. She had, it is true, Romanized the West, and a large part of it remains Roman (Latin) to this day, but she could not Romanize the East. The result, as we have seen, was the division of the Empire into an Eastern and a Western section. This lack of unity appears again when we view the local units of the Empire — the cities. The Empire was made up of hundreds of cities, but there were no vital bonds uniting them. There was city pride and spirit, but nothing, or almost nothing, corresponding to what is to-day called national patriotism. It was this lack of public spirit, this lack of spiritual bonds binding the cities into a unified state, that the historian Guizot maintains was the chief cause of the dissolution of the Empire. With the first blows of the barbarians it fell to pieces.

Lastly, in the growing strength of the German tribes outside the Empire must be sought the immediate cause of the destruction of the Roman authority in the West. Since the time of Julius Cæsar these tribes had formed powerful confederacies. By the Romans, too, they had been taught the art of war. Thus Rome put into the hands of the barbarians the weapons they were to use against her. The part that these northern folk played in the tragedy of the downfall of the imperial government in the West we have just now witnessed. But in contemplating the tragedy we need to bear in mind the adage that a thing cannot be crushed from without until ready to perish from decay within. The Germans, as a great historian (Eduard Meyer) has said, did not destroy Roman civilization; it was self-destroyed.

**176. Import of the Downfall of the Roman Government in the West.** "The emancipation of Italy and the Western provinces from direct imperial control, which was signalized by Odoacer's succession," writes an eminent historian of Rome, "has rightly been

regarded as marking the opening of a new epoch.”<sup>1</sup> We reach here a turning point in the history of the Western world.

The revolution, one of the most momentous in the annals of the European peoples, brought it about that the lamp of culture, which since the second century of the Empire had burned with ever lessening light, was almost extinguished. It ushered in the so-called “Dark Ages.” During this period the new race was slowly attaining the level of culture that the Greeks and Romans had reached.

But the revolution meant much besides disaster and loss. It meant the enrichment of civilization through the incoming of a new and splendidly endowed race. Within the Empire during several centuries three of the most vital elements of civilization, the Greek, the Roman, and the Christian, had been gradually blending. Now was added a fourth factor, the Germanic. It is this element which has had much to do in making modern civilization richer and more progressive than any preceding civilization.

The downfall of the Roman imperial government in the West was, further, an event of immense significance in the political world, for the reason that it rendered possible the growth in western Europe of several nations or states in place of the single Empire.

Another consequence of the fall of the Roman power in the West was the development of the Papacy. In the absence of an emperor in the West the popes rapidly gained influence and power, and soon built up an ecclesiastical empire that in some respects took the place of the old Roman Empire and carried on its civilizing work.

**Selections from the Sources.** TACITUS, *Germania* (the most valuable original account that we possess of the life and manners of our German ancestors about the first century of our era). JORDANES, *Origin and Deeds of the Goths* (Mierow’s trans.), xxxiv–xli (on Attila and the battle of Châlons). ST. AUGUSTINE, *The City of God*. Davis’s *Readings* (Rome), pp. 297–325.

**References (Modern).** HODGKIN, *Italy and her Invaders*, vols. i, ii (on the Visigothic, the Hunnish, and the Vandal invasion). PELHAM, *Outlines of Roman History*, pp. 557–572. MILMAN, *The History of Christianity*, vol. iii. DILL, *Roman Society in the Last Century of the Western Empire* (a book of unsurpassed value). CURTEIS, *History of the Roman Empire* (from 395 to 800 A.D.), chaps. vi–ix. GIBBON, chap. ix, “The State of Germany till the Invasion of

<sup>1</sup> Pelham, *Outlines of Roman History* (1895), p. 572.

the Barbarians in the Time of the Emperor Decius." CHURCH, *The Beginnings of the Middle Ages*; read the introduction and chap. i. KINGSLEY, *The Roman and the Teuton*, lects. i-iii. CREASY, *Decisive Battles of the World*, chap. vi, "The Battle of Châlons, 451 A.D." EMERTON, *An Introduction to the Study of the Middle Ages*, chaps. ii, iii. (These chapters cover admirably the following subjects: "The Two Races," "The Breaking of the Frontier by the Visigoths," and "The Invasion of the Huns.") *The Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. i, chaps. viii-xiv, xix, xx. For the causes of the failure of the Empire in the West, see the following: HODGKIN, *Italy and her Invaders*, vol. ii, pp. 532-613; SEELEY, *Roman Imperialism*, lect. ii, pp. 37-64; BURY, *A History of the Later Roman Empire*, vol. i, chap. iii (Bury makes slavery, oppressive taxation, the importation of barbarians, and Christianity the four chief causes of the weakness and failure of the Empire).

**Topics for Class Reports.** 1. Alaric the Goth: Bradley, *The Goths*, chap. x, pp. 84-98. 2. St. Jerome: Carr, *The Church and the Roman Empire*, chap. xiv. 3. St. Augustine and his *City of God*; Carr, *The Church and the Roman Empire*, chap. xv; Cutts, *Saint Augustine*, chap. xx, pp. 184-194; Dill, *Roman Society in the Last Century of the Western Empire*, pp. 59-73. 4. Causes of the downfall of the Empire in the West: Hodgkin, Seeley, and Bury, as cited above in "References"; Davis, *The Influence of Wealth in Imperial Rome*, chap. viii.



## CHAPTER XI

### ARCHITECTURE, LITERATURE, LAW, AND SOCIAL LIFE AMONG THE ROMANS

#### I. ARCHITECTURE AND ENGINEERING

**177. Rome's Contribution to Architecture.** The architecture of the Romans was, in the main, an imitation of Greek models. But the Romans were not mere servile imitators. They not only modified the architectural forms they borrowed but they gave their structures a distinct character by the prominent use of the arch, which the Greek and oriental builders seldom employed, though they were acquainted with its principle. By means of it the Roman builders gave a new artistic effect to edifices, vaulted wide passages and chambers, carried stupendous aqueducts across the deepest valleys, and spanned the broadest streams with bridges that have resisted all the assaults of time and flood



FIG. 44. THE PANTHEON, AT ROME  
(Present condition)

for eighteen centuries and more down to the present day. These applications of the principle of the arch were the great contribution which the Roman architects made to the science and art of building.

**178. Sacred Edifices.** The temples of the Romans were in general so like those of the Greeks that we need not here take space to enter into a particular description of them. Mention, however, should be

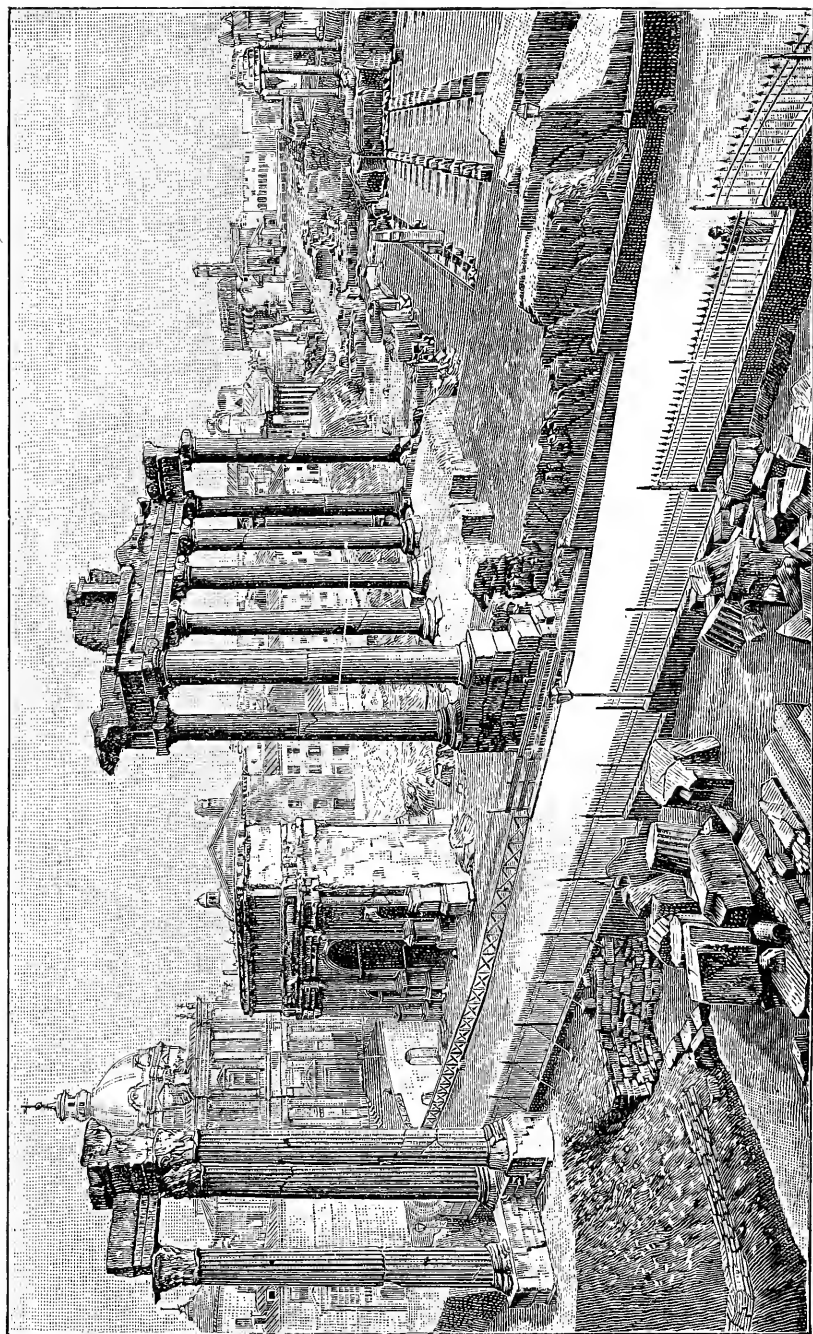


FIG. 45. THE ROMAN FORUM IN 1885

made of their circular vaulted temples, as this was a style of building almost exclusively Italian. The best representative of this style of sacred edifices is the Pantheon, at Rome, which has come down to our own times in a state of wonderful preservation. This structure is about one hundred and forty feet in diameter. The immense concrete dome which vaults the building is one of the boldest pieces of masonry executed by the master builders of the world.

**179. Circuses, Theaters, and Amphitheaters.** The circuses of the Romans were what we should call race courses. There were several at Rome, the most celebrated being the Circus Maximus, which was

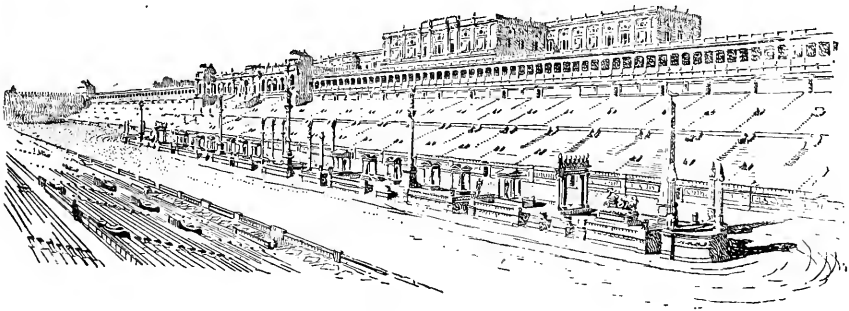


FIG. 46. THE CIRCUS MAXIMUS. (A restoration)

first laid out in the time of the Tarquins and afterwards enlarged as the population of the capital increased, until it was capable, it is said, of holding two or three hundred thousand spectators.

The Romans borrowed the plan of their theaters from the Greeks; their amphitheaters, however, were original with them. The Flavian amphitheater, generally designated as the Colosseum, to which reference has already been made, speaks to us perhaps more impressively of the spirit of a past civilization than any other memorial of the ancient world.<sup>1</sup> The ruins of this immense structure stand to-day as "the embodiment of the power and splendor of the Roman Empire."

Many of the most important cities of Italy and of the provinces were provided with amphitheaters similar in all essential respects to the Colosseum at the capital only much inferior in size, save the one at Capua, which was nearly as large as the Flavian structure.

<sup>1</sup> See sect. 134, and Fig. 47, p. 170.

**180. Military Roads.** Foremost among the works of utility executed by the Romans, and the most expressive of the practical genius of the people, were their military roads. Radiating from the capital, these roads lengthened with the growing Empire, until all the countries about the Mediterranean and beyond the Alps were united to Rome and to one another by a perfect network of highways of such excellent construction that even now, in their ruined state, they excite the admiration and wonder of modern engineers.<sup>1</sup>



FIG. 47. THE COLOSSEUM. (From a photograph)

"Monument of the glory of the Empire, and of its shame." — Dill

These military roads, with characteristic Roman energy and disregard of obstacles, were carried forward, as nearly as possible, in straight lines and on a level, mountains being pierced with tunnels, and valleys crossed by means of massive viaducts. Near Naples may be seen one of these old tunnels still in use. It is nearly half

<sup>1</sup> Besides the *Via Appia* (sect. 45), which connected Rome with Campania and south-eastern Italy, there were three other specially important roads issuing from Rome and affording communication between the capital and northern Italy. These were the *Via Flaminia*, which ran to Ariminum on the Adriatic; the *Via Aurelia*, which ran up the coast to Pisa; and the *Via Cassia*, which traversed the midland districts. The plains of the Po were fairly netted with roads. One of the most important of these was the *Via Emilia*, which continued the *Via Flaminia* to Placentia on the Po.

a mile in length, and is called the Grotto of Posilipo (see Fig. 9). It leads the ancient Appian Way through a promontory that at this point presents an obstacle to its course.

The usual width of the roadway was from four to five yards. The bed was formed of cement and broken rock, upon which was sometimes laid, as in the case of the *Via Appia*, a solid pavement of stone. In the great Forum at Rome was a gilded post, from which distances on all the roads of the peninsula were measured.

**181. Aqueducts.** The aqueducts of ancient Rome were among the most important of the utilitarian works of the Romans. The water system of the capital was commenced about 313 B.C. by Appius Claudius, who secured the building of an aqueduct which led water into the city from the Sabine hills. During the Republic four aqueducts in all were completed; under the emperors the number was increased to fourteen.<sup>1</sup> The longest of these was about fifty-five miles in length. The aqueducts usually ran beneath the surface, but when a depression was to be crossed they were lifted on arches, which sometimes were over one hundred feet high.<sup>2</sup> These lofty arches running in long, broken lines over the plains beyond the walls of Rome are the most striking feature of the Campagna at the present time.

**182. Thermæ or Baths.** Among the ancient Romans bathing became in time a luxurious art. Under the Republic, bathing-houses were erected in considerable numbers. But it was during the imperial

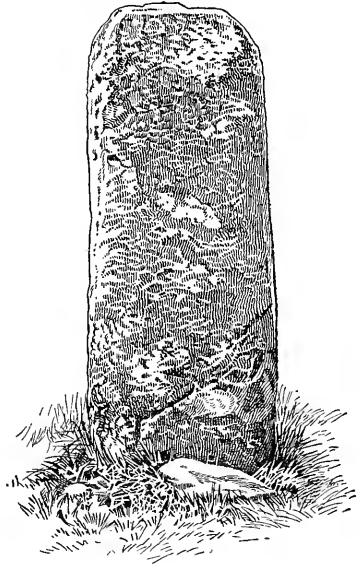


FIG. 48. A ROMAN MILESTONE. (From a photograph)

This milestone, which stands at the modern Chesterholm near the line of the Hadrian Wall, is the only one in Britain standing where it was placed by the old Roman engineers

<sup>1</sup> Several of these are still in use.

<sup>2</sup> The Romans carried their aqueducts across depressions and valleys on high arches of masonry, not because they were ignorant of the principle that water seeks a level, but for the reason that they could not make large pipes strong enough to resist the great pressure to which they would be subjected.

period that those magnificent structures to which the name *thermæ* properly attaches, were erected. These edifices were very different from the bathing-houses of the republican era, being among the most elaborate and expensive of the imperial works. They contained chambers for cold, hot, and swimming baths; dressing-rooms and gymnasia; museums and libraries; covered colonnades for lounging and conversation; beautiful grounds filled with statues; and every other adjunct that could add to the sense of luxury and

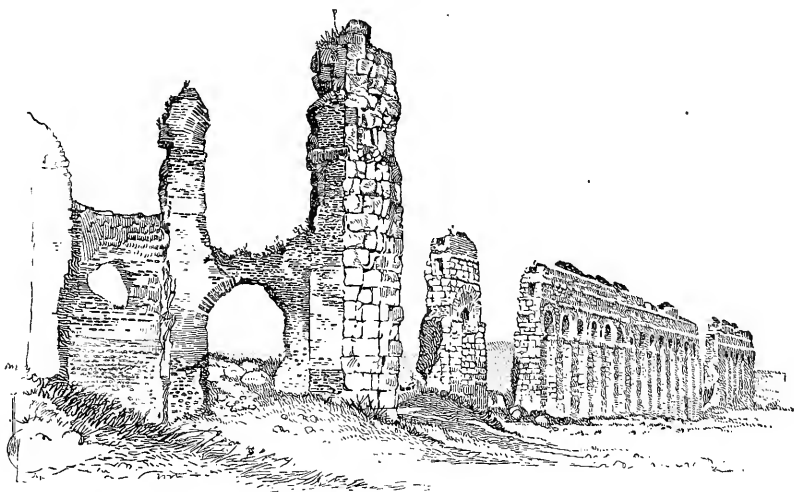


FIG. 49. THE CLAUDIAN AQUEDUCT. (From a photograph)

relaxation.<sup>1</sup> Being intended to exhibit the liberality of their imperial builders, they were thrown open to the public free of charge.

It was not the inhabitants of the capital alone that had converted bathing into a luxury and an art. There was no town of any considerable size anywhere within the limits of the Empire that was not provided with its *thermæ*; and wherever springs possessing medicinal properties broke from the ground, there arose magnificent baths, and such spots became the favorite watering-places of the Romans. Thus Baden-Baden was a noted and luxurious resort of the wealthy Romans centuries before it became the great summer haunt of the modern Germans.

<sup>1</sup> Lanciani calls these imperial *thermæ* "gigantic clubhouses, whither the voluptuary and the elegant youth repaired for pastime and enjoyment."

**183. Villas.** Every wealthy Roman possessed his villa, and many kept up several in different parts of Italy. These country residences, while retaining all the conveniences of the city palace, such as baths, museums, and libraries, added to these such adjuncts as were denied a place by the restricted room of the capital — extensive gardens, aviaries, fish ponds, vineyards, olive orchards, shaded walks, and well-kept drives.

The most noted of Roman villas was that of Hadrian, at Tibur (now Tivoli). It was intended to be a miniature representation of both the upper and the lower world. In one part of the grounds were reproduced the Vale of Tempe and other celebrated bits of scenery, which doubtless Hadrian in his extended travels had seen and admired. Subterranean labyrinths enabled the visitor to descend

into Hades and to behold the fabled scenes of that dolorous region.

**184. Sepulchral Monuments.** The Romans in the earliest times seem usually to have disposed of their dead by burial; but towards the close of the republican period cremation or burning became common. The incoming of Christianity with its doctrine of the resurrection of the body caused burying to become again the prevalent mode.



FIG. 50. THE MEDICINAL SPRING OF UMERI  
(From Schreiber's *Atlas of Classical Antiquities*)

A visitor's souvenir of the spring. At the top the nymph of the spring pours water from an urn; in the center a man fills a large jar; at the bottom, another man fills a barrel on a water-wagon. At the right an invalid receives a glass of water from an attendant. The other two persons (one obviously poor and the other well-to-do) at the altars make offerings or pour libations

The favorite burying-place among the Romans was along the highways; "for the dead were thought of as ever turning towards this life." The Appian Way, for a distance of several miles from the gates of the capital, was lined with sepulchral monuments.

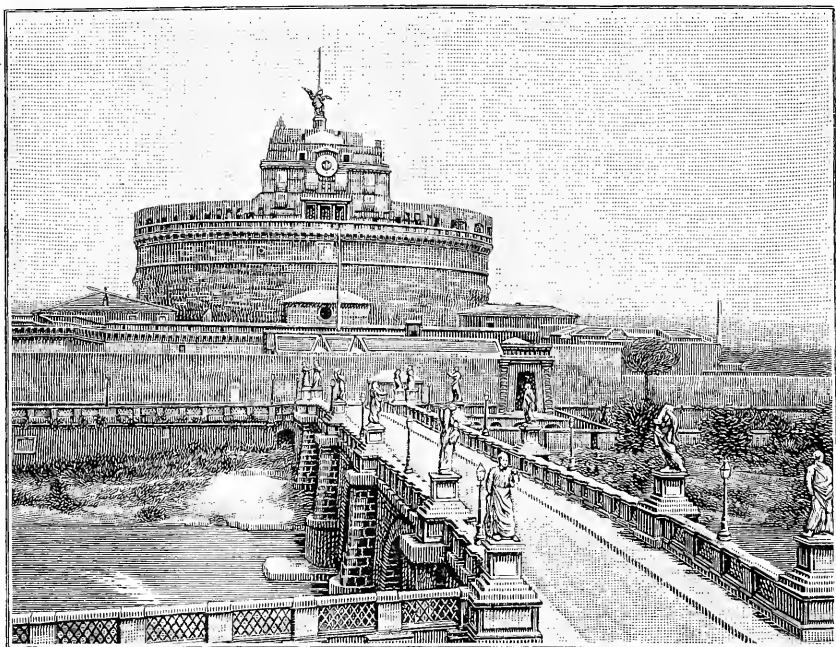


FIG. 51. MAUSOLEUM OF HADRIAN, AT ROME. (From a photograph)

Many of these, in a ruined state, still line the ancient highway (see Fig. 8). These structures were as varied in design as are the monuments in modern cemeteries.<sup>1</sup>

## II. LITERATURE AND LAW

**185. Poets of the Republic.** Latin literature was almost wholly imitative or borrowed, being a reproduction of Greek models; still it performed a most important service for civilization by being the medium for the dissemination throughout the world of the rich literary treasures of Greece.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For examples of Roman triumphal columns and arches, see Figs. 11, 32, 42.

<sup>2</sup> There will here be in place a word respecting ancient publishers and books. There were in Rome several publishing-houses, which, in their day, enjoyed a wide reputation and conducted an extended business. "Indeed, the antique book trade," says Guhl,



It was the dramatic productions of the Greeks which were first copied and studied by the Romans. For nearly two centuries, from 240 to 78 B.C., dramatic literature was almost the only form of composition cultivated at Rome. During this epoch appeared all the great dramatists ever produced by the Latin-speaking race. The most noteworthy of these were Plautus (about 254-184 B.C.) and Terence (about 185-160 B.C.), both writers of comedy. Their works were drawn from or based upon the pieces of the Greek New Comedy.<sup>1</sup> Some of the stock characters of the comic stage of to-day are types portrayed in their pieces, for as Plautus and Terence borrowed from the Greek stage so have modern writers of comedy drawn freely from Roman predecessors.

During the later republican period there appeared two poets of distinguished merit, Lucretius and Catullus. Lucretius (95-51 B.C.) studied at Athens, where he became deeply imbued with the philosophy of Epicurus. In his great poem *On the Nature of Things*, the practical aim of which was to free men from fear of the gods and of death, he tells how the generations of life were evolved from the teeming earth; declares that the gods do not trouble themselves about earthly affairs, but that storms, lightning, volcanoes, and pestilences are produced by natural causes and not by the anger of the celestials; and finally reaches the conclusion that death ends all for man, and so need not be feared.

Catullus (born about 87 B.C.) was a lyric poet. He has been called the Roman Burns, as well on account of the waywardness of his life as from the sweetness of his song.

**186. Poets of the Augustan Age.** Three poets — Vergil (70-19 B.C.), Horace (65-8 B.C.), and Ovid (43 B.C.-18 A.D.) — have cast an unfading luster over the period covered by the reign of Augustus.

"was carried on on a scale hardly surpassed by modern times. . . . The place of the press in our literature was taken by the slaves." Through practice they gained surprising facility as copyists, and books were multiplied with great rapidity. And, as to the books themselves, we must bear in mind that a book in the ancient sense was simply a roll of manuscript or parchment, and contained nothing like the amount of matter held by an ordinary modern volume. Thus Cæsar's *Gallie Wars*, which makes a single volume of moderate size with us, made eight Roman books. Most of the houses of the wealthy Romans contained libraries. The collection of Sammonicus Serenus, tutor of Gordian, numbered 62,000 books. <sup>1</sup>See *Eastern Nations and Greece* (2nd Rev. Ed.), p. 310, n. 2.

So distinguished have these writers rendered the age in which they lived, that any period in a people's literature signalized by exceptional literary taste and refinement is called, in allusion to this Roman era, an *Augustan Age*.

The three great works of Vergil are the *Eclogues*, the *Georgics*, and the *Æneid*. The *Eclogues* are a series of pastorals, which are very close imitations of the poems of Theocritus, the Sicilian. In the *Georgics* Vergil extols and dignifies the husbandman and his labor. The work was written at the suggestion of Mæcenas, who hoped by means of the poet's verse to allure his countrymen back to that love for the art of husbandry which animated the fathers of the early Roman state. Throughout the work Vergil follows very closely the *Works and Days* of the Greek poet Hesiod. Without the *Georgics* we should never have had the *Seasons* of Thomson; for this work of the English poet is in a large measure a direct translation of the verses of Vergil.

The *Æneid* holds a place among the world's great epics. In this, his chief work, Vergil was a close student of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and to them he is indebted for very many of his finest metaphors, similes, and descriptive passages. A chief aim of the poem was to glorify Rome by connecting its origin and history with the story of Troy and the purposes of the gods, and to exalt Augustus as the man who had ended desolating war and brought in an era of peace.

Horace's *Odes*, *Satires*, and *Epistles* have all helped win for him his widespread fame; but the first best exhibit his genius and his subtle grace of expression.

Ovid's most celebrated work is his *Metamorphoses*, in which he describes between two and three hundred metamorphoses, or transformations, suffered by various persons, gods, heroes, and goddesses, as related in the innumerable fables of the Greek and Roman mythologies.

**187. Satire and Satirists.** Satire thrives best in the reeking soil and tainted atmosphere of an age of selfishness, immorality, and vice. Such an age was that which followed the Augustan at Rome. Hence arose a succession of writers whose mastery of sharp and

stinging satire has caused their productions to become the models of all subsequent attempts in the same species of literature.

Two names stand out in special prominence—Persius (34–62 A.D.), “the Roman Puritan,” and Juvenal (about 40–120 A.D.). The works of these writers possess a special historical value and interest since they cast a strong side light upon life at Rome during the early portion of the imperial period.<sup>1</sup>

The indignant protest of Persius and Juvenal against the vices and follies of their time is almost the last utterance of the Latin Muse. After the death of Juvenal the Roman world produced not a single poet of preëminent merit.

**188. Oratory among the Romans.** “Public oratory,” as has been truly said, “is the child of political freedom, and cannot exist without it.” We see this illustrated in the history of republican Athens. Equally well is the same truth exemplified by the records of the Roman state. All the great orators of Rome arose under the Republic. Among these Hortensius and Cicero stand preëminent.

Hortensius (114–50 B.C.) was a famous lawyer whose name adorns the legal profession at the capital both as the learned jurist and as the eloquent advocate. His forensic talent won for him a lucrative law practice, through which he gathered an immense fortune.

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 B.C.), the contemporary and friend of Hortensius, is easily the first of Roman orators — “the most eloquent of all the sons of Romulus.” As a youth he enjoyed every advantage that wealth and parental ambition could confer or suggest. Like many others of the Roman patrician youth of his time, he was sent to Greece to finish his education in the schools of Athens. Returning to Italy, he soon assumed a position of commanding influence at the Roman capital (sect. 106). Even more highly prized than his orations and essays are his letters, for Cicero was a most delightful letter-writer. His letters to his friend Atticus — nearly three hundred have been preserved — are among the most charming specimens of that species of composition.

<sup>1</sup> Martial, an epigrammatic poet (born about 40 A.D.), also was a satirist of this period, but he rebuked only some of the minor vices of society. Many of his own writings, judged by the moral sense of to-day, are grossly immoral.

**189. Latin Historians.** Ancient Rome produced four writers of history whose works have won for them lasting fame — Cæsar, Sallust, Livy, and Tacitus.<sup>1</sup> Suetonius may also be mentioned in this place, although his writings were rather biographical than historical.

Cæsar's productions are his *Commentaries on the Gallic War* and his *Memoirs of the Civil War*. His *Commentaries* will always be cited along with the *Anabasis* of Xenophon as a model of the narrative style of writing.

Sallust (86–34 B.C.) was the contemporary and friend of Cæsar. As prætor of one of the African provinces, he amassed an immense fortune, by harsh, if not unjust, exactions, and erected at Rome a palatial residence with beautiful gardens, which became one of the favorite resorts of the literary characters of the capital. The two works upon which his fame rests are the *Conspiracy of Catiline* and the *Jugurthine War*.

Livy (59 B.C.–17 A.D.) was one of the brightest ornaments of the Augustan Age. Herodotus among the ancient, and Macaulay among the modern, writers of historical narrative are the names with which his is most often compared. His greatest work is his *Annals*, a history of Rome from the earliest times to the year 9 B.C. Unfortunately, only thirty-five of the one hundred and forty-two books of this admirable production have been preserved. Many have been the laments over "the lost books of Livy." Livy loved a story equally well with Herodotus. Like the Greek historian, he was overcredulous, and relates with charming ingenuousness, usually without the least questioning of their credibility, all the legends and myths that were extant in his day respecting the early affairs of Rome. Modern criticism has shown that the first portion of his history is entirely unreliable as a chronicle of actual events. However, it is a most entertaining account of what the Romans themselves thought and believed in regard to the origin of their race, the founding of their city, and the deeds and virtues of their forefathers.

<sup>1</sup> A fuller list of Roman historical authors would have to admit the name of Fabius Pictor, who was the first historian of the Latin-speaking race; that of Cato the Censor, of whose *Antiquities* we possess the merest fragments; and that of Cornelius Nepos, who wrote in the first century B.C.

The most highly prized work of Tacitus is his *Germania*, a treatise on the manners and customs of the Germans. In this work Tacitus sets in strong contrast the virtues of the untutored Germans and the vices of the cultured Romans.

**190. Science, Ethics, and Philosophy.** Under this head may be grouped the names of Seneca, Pliny the Elder, Pliny the Younger, Marcus Aurelius, and Epictetus.

Seneca (about 1–65 A.D.), moralist and philosopher of the Stoic school, has already come to our notice as the tutor of Nero (sect. 131). He was a disbeliever in the popular religion of his countrymen, and entertained conceptions of God and his moral government not very different from those of Socrates.

Pliny the Elder (23–79 A.D.) is almost the only Roman who won renown as a naturalist (see sect. 134). The only work of his that has been spared to us is his *Natural History*, a sort of Roman encyclopedia.

In connection with the name of Pliny the Elder must be mentioned that of his nephew, Pliny the Younger (sect. 137). His epistles, like the letters of Cicero, are among the most valuable of the Roman prose productions that have come down to us.

Marcus Aurelius the emperor and Epictetus the slave hold the first place among the ethical teachers of Rome. The former wrote his *Meditations* (sect. 139); but the latter, like Socrates, committed nothing to writing, so that we know of the character of his teachings only through one of his pupils, Arrian by name. Epictetus (born about 50 A.D.) was for many years a slave at the capital, but, securing in some way his freedom, he became a teacher of philosophy. His name is inseparably linked with that of Marcus Aurelius as a teacher of the purest system of morals found outside of Christianity. Epictetus and Aurelius were the last eminent representatives of the Greek philosopher Zeno. Christianity, giving a larger place to the affections than did Stoicism, was already fast winning the hearts of men.



FIG. 52. SENECA. (From the double bust of Seneca and Socrates in the Berlin Museum)

**191. Writers of the Early Latin Church.** The Christian authors of the first three centuries, like the writers of the New Testament, employed the Greek, that being the language of learning and culture. As the Latin tongue, however, gradually came into more general use throughout the West, the Christian authors naturally began to use it in the composition of their works. Hence almost all the writings of the Fathers of the Church produced in the western half of the Empire during the later imperial period were composed in Latin. From among the many names that adorn the Church literature of this period we shall select only two for special mention — St. Jerome and St. Augustine.

Jerome (342?–420 A.D.) was a native of Pannonia. For many years he led a monastic life at Bethlehem. He is especially held in memory through his translation of the Scriptures into Latin. This version is known as the *Vulgate*, and is the one which, with slight changes, is still used in the Roman Catholic Church. "It was for Europe of the Middle Ages," asserts Mackail, "more than Homer was to Greece."

Aurelius Augustine (354–430 A.D.) was born near Carthage, in Africa. He was the most eminent writer of the Christian Church during the later Roman period. His *City of God*, a truly wonderful work, possesses a special interest for the historian. The book was written just when Rome was becoming the spoil of the barbarians. It was designed to answer the charge of the pagans that Christianity, turning the people away from the worship of the ancient gods, was the cause of the calamities that were befalling the Roman state.

**192. Roman Law and Law Literature.** Although the Latin writers in all the departments of literary effort which we have so far reviewed did much valuable work, yet the Roman intellect in all these provinces was under Greek guidance. Its work was largely imitative. But in another department it was different. We mean, of course, the field of legal and political science. Here the Romans ceased to be pupils and became teachers. Nations, like men, have their mission. Rome's mission was to give laws to the world.

Our knowledge of the law system of the Romans begins with the legislation of the Twelve Tables, about 450 B.C. (sect. 33).

Throughout all the republican period the laws were growing less harsh and cruel, and were becoming more liberal and scientific.

From 100 B.C. to 250 A.D. lived and wrote the most famous of the Roman jurists and law writers, who created the most remarkable law literature ever produced by any people. The great unvarying principles that underlie and regulate all social and political relations were by them examined, illustrated, and expounded. Gaius, Ulpian, Paulus, Papinian, and Pomponius are among the most renowned of the writers who, during the period just indicated, enriched by their writings and opinions this branch of Latin literature.

In the year 527 A.D. Justinian became emperor of the Roman Empire in the East. He almost immediately appointed a commission, headed by the great lawyer Tribonian, to collect and arrange in a systematic manner the immense mass of Roman laws and the writings of the jurists. The undertaking was like that of the decemvirs in connection with the Twelve Tables, only far greater. The result of the work of the commission was what is known as the *Corpus Juris Civilis*, or "Body of the Civil Law." This consisted of three parts—the *Code*, the *Pandects*, and the *Institutes*.<sup>1</sup> The *Code* was a revised and compressed collection of all the laws, instructions to judicial officers, and opinions on legal subjects promulgated by the different emperors since the time of Hadrian; the *Pandects* ("all-containing") were a digest or abridgment of the writings, opinions, and decisions of the most eminent of the old Roman jurists and lawyers. The *Institutes* were a condensed edition of the *Pandects*, and were intended to form an elementary textbook for the use of students in the great law schools of the Empire.

The body of the Roman law thus preserved and transmitted was the great contribution of the Latin intellect to civilization.<sup>2</sup> It has

<sup>1</sup> A later work called the *Novels* comprised the laws of Justinian promulgated subsequent to the completion of the *Code*.

<sup>2</sup> Notwithstanding that the Romans had much political experience and developed a wonderfully complex unwritten constitution, still, aside from their municipal and administrative systems, they made no permanent contribution to the art of government or to the science of constitutional law. It was left for the English people, virtually unaided by Roman precedents, to work out the constitution of the modern free state. The primary assemblies of the Romans could afford no instructive precedents in the department of legislation. The practical working of the device of the

exerted a profound influence upon the law systems of almost all the European peoples. Thus does the once little Palatine city of the Tiber still rule the world. The religion of Judea, the arts of Greece, and the laws of Rome are three very real and potent elements in modern civilization.

### III. SOCIAL LIFE

**193. Education.** Under the Republic there were no public schools in Rome; education was a private affair. Under the early Empire a mixed system prevailed, there being both public and private schools. Later, education came more completely under the supervision of the state. The salaries of the teachers and lecturers were usually paid by the municipalities, but sometimes from the imperial chest.

Never was the profession of the teacher held in such esteem as among the later Romans. Teachers were made exempt from many public burdens and duties and were even invested with inviolability, like heralds and tribunes.

The education of the Roman boy differed from that of the Greek youth in being more practical. The laws of the Twelve Tables were committed to memory; and rhetoric and oratory were given special attention, as a mastery of the art of public speaking was an almost indispensable acquirement for the Roman citizen who aspired to take a prominent part in the affairs of state.

After their conquest of Magna Græcia and of Greece the Romans were brought into closer relations with Greek culture than had hitherto existed. The Roman youth were taught the language of Athens, often to the neglect, it appears, of their native tongue; for we hear Cato the Censor complaining that the boys of his time spoke Greek before they could use their own language. Young men belonging to families of means not unusually went to Greece, just as the graduates of our schools go to Europe, to finish their education.

dual executive of the Republic was not calculated to commend it to later statesmen. The single admirable feature in the composition of the later republican Senate of Rome, namely, the giving of seats in that body to ex-magistrates, has not been imitated by modern constitution makers, though James Bryce, in his commentary on the American commonwealth, suggests that they might have done so to advantage in the making up of the upper chambers of their legislatures.



Many of the most prominent statesmen of Rome, as, for instance, Cicero and Julius Cæsar, received the advantages of this higher training in the schools of Greece.

**194. Social Position of Woman.** Until after her marriage the daughter of the family was kept in almost oriental seclusion. Marriage gave her a certain freedom. She might now be present at the races of the circus and the shows of the theater and amphitheater — a privilege rarely accorded to her before marriage.

In the early, virtuous period of the Roman state the wife and mother held a dignified and assured position in the household, and divorces were unusual, there being no instance of one, it is said, until the year 231 B.C.; but in later times her position became less honored and divorce grew to be very common. The husband had the right to divorce his wife for the slightest cause or for no cause at all. In this disregard of the sanctity of the family relation may doubtless be found one cause of the degeneracy and failure of the Roman stock.

**195. Public Amusements; the Theater and the Circus.** The entertainments of the theater, the games of the circus, and the combats of the amphitheater were the three principal public amusements of the Romans. These entertainments, in general, increased in popularity as liberty declined, the great festive gatherings at the various places of amusement taking the place of the political assemblies of the Republic. The public exhibitions under the Empire were, in a certain sense, the compensation which the emperors offered the people for their surrender of the right of participation in public affairs; and the people were content to accept the exchange.

Tragedy was never held in high esteem at Rome; the people saw too much real tragedy in the exhibitions of the amphitheater to care much for the make-believe tragedies of the stage. The entertainments of the theaters usually took the form of comedies, farces, and pantomimes. The last were particularly popular, both because the vast size of the theaters made it quite impossible for the actor to make his voice heard throughout the structure and for the reason that the language of signs was the only language that could be readily understood by an audience made up of so many different nationalities as composed a Roman assemblage. Almost from the

beginning the Roman stage was gross and immoral. It was one of the main agencies to which must be attributed the undermining of the originally sound moral life of Roman society.

More important and more popular than the entertainments of the theater were the various games of the circus, especially the chariot races.

**196. Animal Baitings.** But far surpassing in their terrible fascination all other public amusements were the animal baitings and the gladiatorial combats of the amphitheater.

The beasts required for the baitings were secured in different parts of the world and transported to Rome and the other cities of the Empire at enormous expense. The wildernesses of northern Europe furnished bears and wolves; Scotland sent fierce dogs; Africa contributed lions, crocodiles, and leopards; Asia added elephants and tigers. These creatures were pitted against one another in every conceivable way. Often a promiscuous multitude would be turned loose in the arena at once. But even the terrific scene that then ensued became at last too tame to stir the blood of the Roman populace. Hence a new species of entertainment was demanded by the spectators of the amphitheater. This was the gladiatorial combat.

**197. The Gladiatorial Combats.** Gladiatorial shows seem to have had their origin in Etruria, whence they were brought to Rome. It was a custom among the early Etruscans to slay prisoners upon the warrior's grave, it being thought that the manes of the dead delighted in the blood of such victims. In later times the prisoners were allowed to fight and kill one another, this being deemed more humane than slaying them in cold blood.

The first gladiatorial spectacle at Rome was presented by two sons at the funeral of their father in the year 264 B.C. This exhibition was arranged in one of the forums, as there were at that time no amphitheaters in existence. From this time the public taste for this kind of entertainment grew rapidly, and by the beginning of the imperial period had become an infatuation. It was no longer the manes of the dead, but the spirits of the living that the spectacles were intended to appease. At first the combatants were slaves, captives, or condemned criminals; but at last knights, senators, and

even women descended voluntarily into the arena. Training-schools were established at Rome, Capua, Ravenna, and other cities. Free citizens often sold themselves to the keepers of these seminaries; and to them flocked desperate men of all classes and ruined spend-thrifts of the noblest patrician houses. Slaves and criminals were encouraged to become proficient in the art by the promise of freedom if they survived the combats beyond a certain number of years.

Sometimes the gladiators fought in pairs; again, great companies engaged at once in the deadly fray. They fought in chariots, on horseback, on foot — in all the ways in which soldiers were accustomed to fight in actual battle. The contestants were armed with lances, swords, daggers, tridents — with every manner of weapon. Some were provided with nets and lassos with which they entangled their adversaries before slaying them.

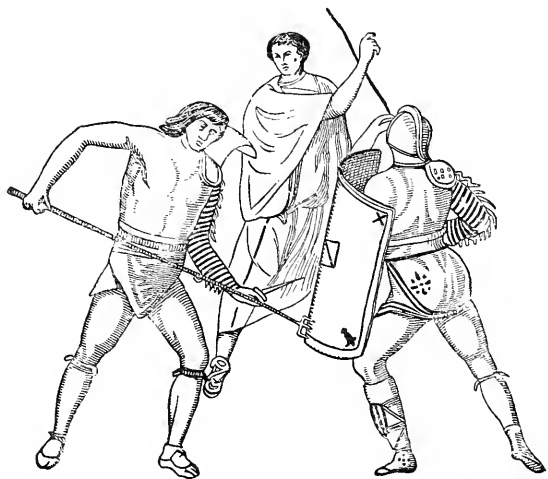


FIG. 53. GLADIATORS. (From an ancient mosaic)

The life of a wounded gladiator was, in ordinary cases, in the hands of the spectators. If in response to his appeal for mercy, which was made by outstretching the forefinger, the spectators waved their handkerchiefs or reached out their hands with thumbs extended, that indicated that his prayer had been heard; but if they extended their hands with thumbs turned in, that was the signal for the victor to give him the death stroke. Sometimes the dying were aroused and forced to resume the fight by being burned with a hot iron. The dead bodies were dragged from the arena with hooks, like the carcasses of animals, and the pools of blood soaked up with dry sand.

These shows increased to such an extent that they entirely overshadowed the entertainments of the circus and the theater. Ambitious

officials and commanders arranged such spectacles in order to curry favor with the masses; magistrates were expected to give them in connection with the public festivals; the heads of aspiring families provided them "in order to acquire social position"; wealthy citizens prepared them as an indispensable feature of a fashionable banquet; the children — catching the spirit of their elders — imitated them in their plays.

The rivalries between ambitious leaders during the later years of the Republic tended greatly to increase the number of gladiatorial shows, as liberality in arranging these spectacles was a sure passport



FIG. 54. SEMICIRCULAR DINING-COUCH. (From a Pompeian wall painting)

to popular favor. It was reserved for the emperors, however, to exhibit them on a truly imperial scale. Titus, upon the dedication of the Flavian amphitheater, provided games, mostly gladiatorial combats, that lasted one hundred days. Trajan celebrated his victories with shows that lasted still longer, in the progress of which ten thousand gladiators fought upon the arena, and more than ten thousand wild beasts were slain.<sup>1</sup>

**198. Luxury.** By luxury, as we shall use the word, we mean extravagant and self-indulgent living. This vice seems to have been almost unknown in early Rome. The primitive Romans were men of frugal habits, who, like Manius Curius Dentatus (sect. 77), found contentment in poverty and disdained riches.

<sup>1</sup> For the suppression of the gladiatorial games, see sect. 165.

A great change, however, as we have seen, passed over Roman society after the conquest of the East and the development of the corrupt provincial system of the later Republic. The colossal fortunes quickly and dishonestly amassed by the ruling class marked the incoming at Rome of such a reign of luxury as perhaps no other capital of the world ever witnessed. This luxury was at its height in the last century of the Republic and the first of the Empire. Never perhaps has great wealth been more grossly misused than during this period at Rome. A characteristically Roman vice of this age was gluttony, or gross table-indulgence.

**199. State Distribution of Corn.** The free distribution of corn at Rome has been characterized as the leading fact of Roman life. It will be recalled that this pernicious practice had its beginnings in the legislation of Gaius Gracchus (sect. 88). Just before the establishment of the Empire over three hundred thousand Roman citizens were recipients of this state bounty. In the time of the Antonines the number is asserted to have been even larger. The corn for this enormous distribution was derived, in large part, from a grain tribute exacted of the African and other corn-producing provinces. In the third century, to the largesses of corn were added doles of oil, wine, and pork.

The evils that resulted from this misdirected state charity can hardly be overstated. Idleness and all its accompanying vices were fostered to such a degree that we probably shall not be wrong in enumerating the practice as one of the chief causes of the demoralization of society at Rome under the emperors.

**200. Slavery.** The number of slaves in the Roman state under the later Republic and the earlier Empire was very great, some estimates making it equal to the number of freemen. Some large proprietors owned as many as twenty thousand. The love of ostentation led to the multiplication of offices in the households of the wealthy and the employment of a special slave for every different kind of work. Thus there was the slave called the *sandalio*, whose sole duty it was to care for his master's sandals; and another called the *nomenclator*, whose exclusive business it was to accompany his master when he went upon the street and give him the names of

such persons as he ought to recognize. The price of slaves varied from a few dollars to ten or twenty thousand dollars — these last figures being, of course, exceptional. Greek slaves were the most valuable, as their lively intelligence rendered them serviceable in positions calling for special talent. Slaves skilled in medicine or other professions were often let out for hire, or were set free on condition that they should give their former master a part of their earnings.

The slave class was chiefly recruited, as in Greece, by war and by the practice of kidnaping. Some of the outlying provinces in Asia and Africa were almost depopulated by the slave hunters. Delinquent taxpayers were often sold as slaves, and frequently poor persons sold themselves into servitude.

The feeling entertained towards this unfortunate class in the later republican period is illustrated by Varro's classification of slaves as "vocal agricultural implements," and again by Cato the Censor's recommendation to masters to sell their old and decrepit slaves in order to save the expense of caring for them (sect. 77). Sick and hopelessly infirm slaves were taken to an island in the Tiber and left there to die of starvation and exposure. In many cases, as a measure of precaution, the slaves were forced to work in chains and to sleep in subterranean prisons. Their bitter hatred towards their masters, engendered by harsh treatment, is witnessed by the well-known proverb, "As many enemies as slaves," and by the servile revolts of the republican period.

Slaves were treated better under the Empire than under the later Republic — a change to be attributed, doubtless, to the influence of Stoicism and of Christianity. From the first century of the Empire forward there is observable a growing sentiment of humanity towards the bondsman. Imperial edicts take away from the master the right to kill his slave or to sell him to the trader in gladiators, or even to treat him with undue severity, while the Christian priests encouraged the freeing of slaves as an act good for the soul of the master.

**201. Transformation of Slavery into Serfdom.** Besides the teachings of philosophy and religion other influences, social and economic, were at work ameliorating the lot of the slave, and gradually changing the harsh system of slavery as it had developed in the ancient

world into the milder system of serfdom, which characterized the society and life of the Middle Ages. We have seen how in the Middle Empire the originally free tenant farmer was bound to the soil and made a serf (sect. 148). During the same period that the poor agricultural freeman was thus being reduced to a semi-servile condition, the practice grew up of giving the slave of the great Roman proprietor a small plot of ground cut out of the estate to which he belonged on conditions similar to those on which the serf-peasant held his little farm. Custom soon decreed that the possessor of such a holding should not be disturbed in its enjoyment so long as he paid the fixed rent in produce or in personal service, and, furthermore, that it should be an hereditary possession. By the time of the break-up of the Empire in the West, this revolution was far advanced. It was hastened by the incoming of the barbarians, and was well-nigh completed by the seventh or eighth century. The former slave had become a serf. His lot was still hard, but he had gained much. He was no longer a mere chattel: he could not be bought and sold. He could not be separated from his family. Certain of the work days were his own. He could accumulate property. He had secured a part of the rights of a man.

Thus gradually and silently was effected this great revolution, which perhaps more than any other change marked the transformation of the ancient into the mediæval world, and announced the opening of a new epoch in the history of western Europe.

**Selections from the Sources.** CATO, *On Agriculture*, chap. ii (the duties of a Roman proprietor). TACITUS, *Dialogue concerning Oratory*, chaps. xxviii, xxix (the old and the new education). Munro's *Source Book*, pp. 179-216; Davis's *Readings* (Rome), pp. 211-265.

**References (Modern).** LANCIANI, *Ancient Rome in the Light of Recent Discoveries and New Discoveries in the Forum*. FOWLER, *History of Roman Literature*. SELLAR, *The Roman Poets of the Republic* and *The Roman Poets of the Augustan Age*. MACKAIL, *Latin Literature*. HADLEY, *Introduction to Roman Law*, lect. iii, "The Roman Law before Justinian." GIBBON, chap. xlv (for Roman jurisprudence; this chapter is one of the most noted of Gibbon's great work). INGE, *Social Life in Rome under the Cæsars*. GUHL and KONER, *The Life of the Greeks and Romans* (consult index). Lecky, *History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne* (a book of the first importance; the student is recommended to read vol. i, chap. ii). DILL, *Roman Society in*

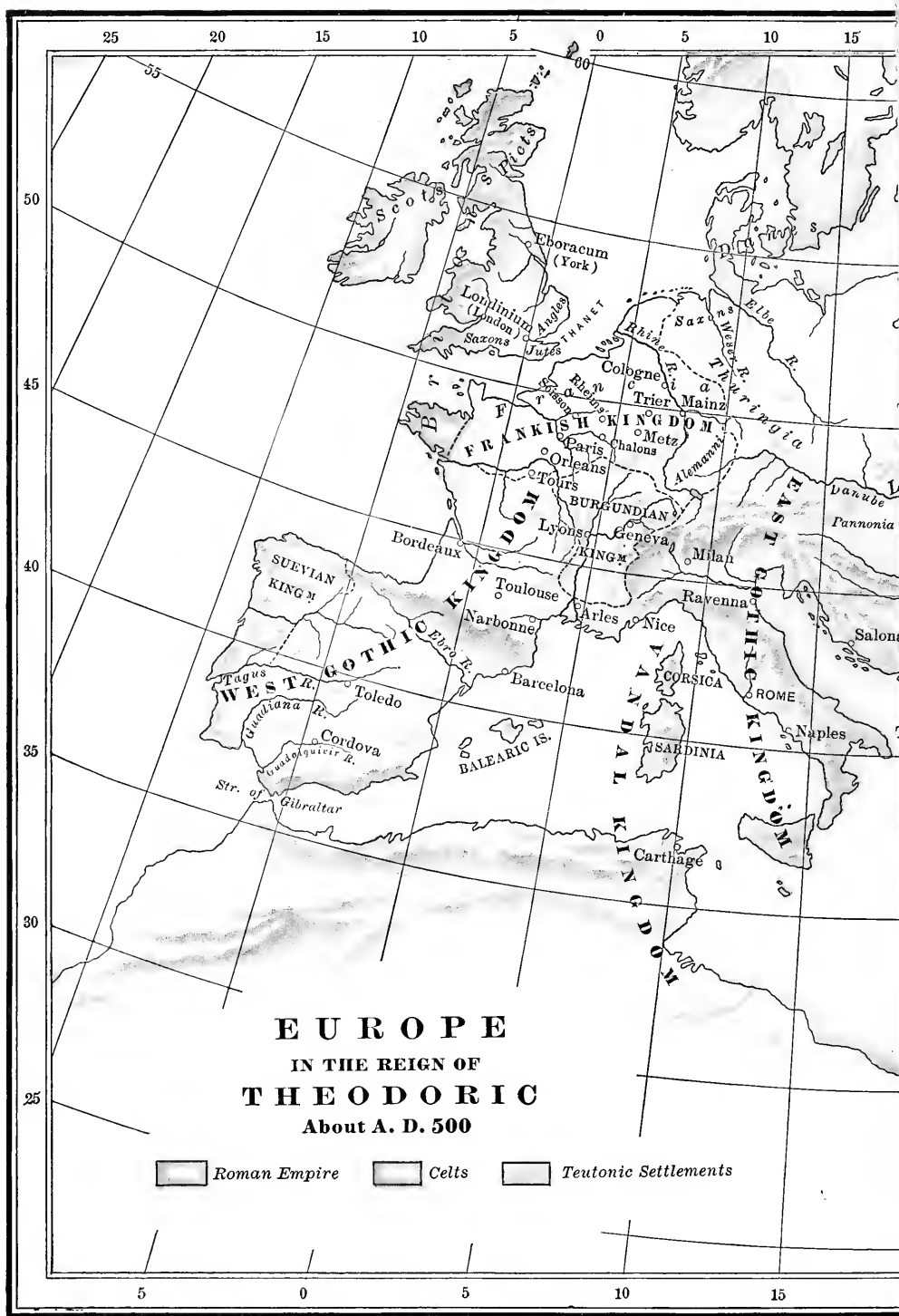
*the Last Century of the Western Empire* (read bk. v, "Characteristics of Roman Education and Culture in the Fifth Century"). PRESTON and DODGE, *The Private Life of the Romans*. GILMAN, *The Story of Rome*, chap. xviii, "Some Manners and Customs of the Roman People."

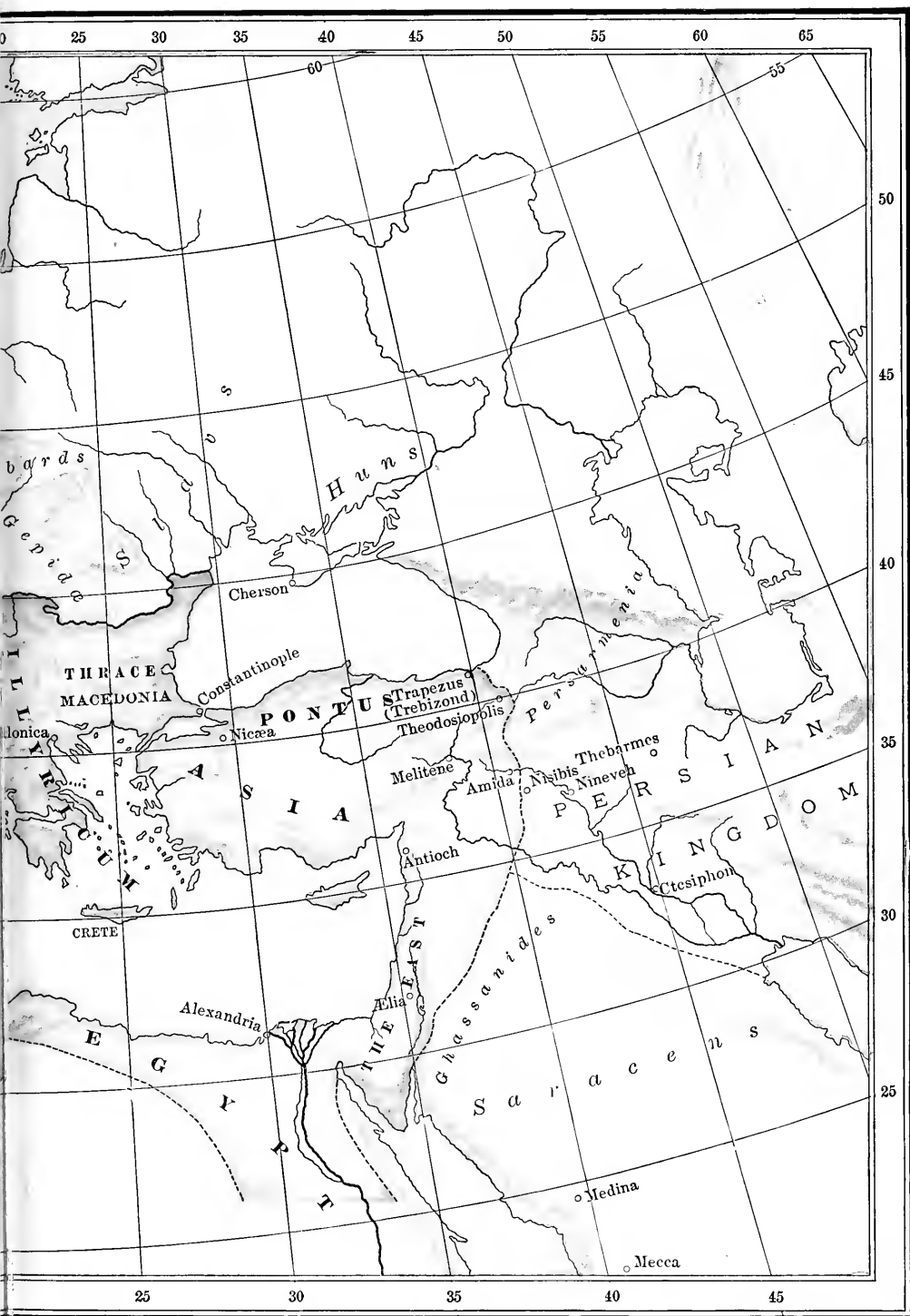
**Topics for Class Reports.** 1. Roman art: Reinach, *Apollo*, pp. 87-94. 2. Education of the Roman boy: Johnston, *The Private Life of the Romans*, chap. iv. 3. The gladiatorial combats: Johnston, *The Private Life of the Romans*, pp. 242-264; Friedländer, *Roman Life and Manners*, vol. ii, chap. i, pp. 41-62. 4. Roman luxury: Friedländer, *Roman Life and Manners*, vol. ii, chap. ii; Davis, *The Influence of Wealth in Imperial Rome*, pp. 152-187. 5. Character and motives of Roman benefactions: Abbott, *The Common People of Ancient Rome*, pp. 179-204.













## PART II. THE ROMANO-GERMAN OR TRANSITION AGE

(476-800 A.D.)

### CHAPTER XII

#### THE BARBARIAN KINGDOMS

In connection with the history of the break-up of the Roman Empire in the West we have already given some account of the migrations and settlements of the German tribes. In the present chapter we shall indicate briefly the political fortunes, for the two centuries and more following the dissolution of the Roman government in the West, of the principal kingdoms set up by the German chieftains in the different parts of the old Empire.

**202. Kingdom of the Ostrogoths (493-554 A.D.).** Odoacer will be recalled as the barbarian chief who dethroned the last of the Western Roman emperors (sect. 174). His feeble government in Italy lasted only seventeen years, when it was brought to an end by the invasion of the Ostrogoths (Eastern Goths) under Theodoric, the greatest of their chiefs, who set up in Italy a new dominion known as the kingdom of the Ostrogoths.

The reign of Theodoric covered thirty-three years (493-527 A.D.)—years of such quiet and prosperity as Italy had not known since the happy era of the Antonines. The king made good his promise that his reign should be such that “the only regret of the people should be that the Goths had not come at an earlier period.” His effort was to preserve Roman civilization, and to this end he repaired the old Roman roads, restored the monuments of the Empire that were falling into decay, and in so far as possible maintained Roman law and custom.

The kingdom established by the rare abilities of Theodoric lasted only twenty-seven years after his death.<sup>1</sup> Justinian, emperor of the East, taking advantage of that event, sent his generals to deliver Italy from the rule of the barbarians. The last of the Ostrogothic kings fell in battle, and Italy, with her fields ravaged and her cities in ruins, was for a brief time reunited to the Empire<sup>2</sup> (544 A.D.).

**203. Kingdom of the Visigoths (415-711 A.D.).** The Visigoths (Western Goths) were already in possession of southern Gaul and

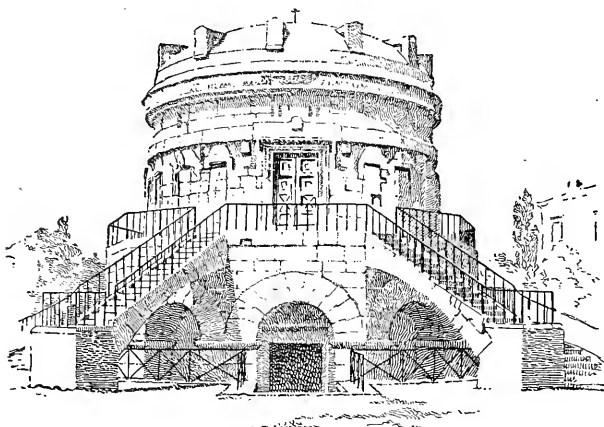


FIG. 55. TOMB OF THEODORIC AT RAVENNA

the greater part of Spain when the Roman imperial government in the West was brought to an end by the act of Odoacer and his companions. They were driven south of the Pyrenees by the kings of the Franks, but held their possessions in Spain until the be-

ginning of the eighth century, when their rule was ended by the Saracens (sect. 249). When thus overturned, the Visigothic kingdom had lasted nearly three hundred years. During this time the conquerors had mingled with the old Romanized inhabitants of Spain, so that in the veins of the Spaniard of to-day is blended the blood of Iberian, Celt, Roman, and Teuton, together with that of the last intruder, the African Moor.

**204. Kingdom of the Vandals (429-533 A.D.).** We have already spoken of the establishment in North Africa of the kingdom of the Vandals, and told how, under the lead of their king, Geiseric, they bore in triumph down the Tiber the heavy spoils of Rome (sect. 173).

<sup>1</sup> Theodoric's chief minister and adviser was Cassiodorus, a statesman and writer of Roman birth, whose constant but unfortunately vain effort was to effect a union of the conquerors and the conquered, and thus to establish in Italy a strong and permanent Romano-Gothic state under the rule of the royal house of the Ostrogoths.

<sup>2</sup> See sect. 238.

Being Arian Christians, the Vandals persecuted with furious zeal the orthodox party, the followers of Athanasius. Moved by the entreaties of the African Catholics, Justinian, the Eastern emperor, sent his general Belisarius to drive the barbarians from Africa. The expedition was successful, and Carthage and the fruitful fields of Africa were restored to the Empire after having suffered the insolence of the barbarian conquerors for more than a hundred years. The Vandals remaining in the country were gradually absorbed by the old Roman population, and after a few generations no certain trace of the barbarian invaders could be detected in the physical appearance, the language, or the customs of the inhabitants of the African coast. The Vandal nation had disappeared; the name alone remained.

**205. The Franks under the Merovingians (486-752 A.D.).** Even long before the fall of Rome the Franks, as we have seen (sect. 170), were on the soil of Gaul, laying there the foundations of the French nation and monarchy. Among their several chieftains at this time was Chlodwig or Clovis. Upon the break-up of the Roman Empire in the West, Clovis conceived the ambition of erecting a kingdom upon the ruins of the Roman power. He attacked Syagrius, the Roman governor of a district in northern Gaul still independent of the barbarians, and at Soissons gained a decisive victory over his forces (486 A.D.). Thus was destroyed forever the last remnant in Gaul of that Roman authority which had been established among its barbarian tribes more than five centuries before by the conquests of Julius Cæsar.

Clovis in a short time extended his authority over the greater part of Gaul, reducing to the condition of tributaries the various Teutonic tribes that had taken possession of different portions of the country. Upon his death (511 A.D.) his extensive dominions, in accordance with the ancient Teutonic law of inheritance, were divided among his four sons. About a century and a half of discord followed, by the end of which time the Merovingians<sup>1</sup> had become so feeble and inefficient that they were contemptuously called *rois fainéants*, or "do-nothing kings," and an ambitious officer of the crown known as mayor of the palace (*major domus*), in a

<sup>1</sup> So called from Merowig, an early chieftain of the race.

way that will be explained a little later, pushed aside the weak Merovingian king and gave to the Frankish monarchy a new royal line — the Carolingian.

**206. Kingdom of the Lombards (568-774 A.D.).** Barely a decade had passed after the recovery of Italy from the Ostrogoths by the Eastern emperor Justinian (sect. 238), before a large part of the peninsula was again lost to the Empire through its conquest by another barbarian tribe known as the Lombards. When they entered Italy the Lombards were Christians of the Arian sect; but in time they became converts to the orthodox faith, and Pope Gregory I bestowed upon their king a diadem which came to be known as the "Iron Crown," for the reason that there was wrought into it what was believed to be one of the nails of the cross upon which Christ had suffered.

The kingdom of the Lombards was destroyed by Charles the Great, the most noted of the Frankish rulers, in the year 774; but the blood of the invaders had by this time become intermingled with that of the former subjects of the Empire, so that throughout all that part of the peninsula which is still called Lombardy after them one will to-day occasionally see the fair hair and light complexion which reveal the strain of German blood in the veins of the present inhabitants.

One important result of the Lombard conquest of Italy was the destruction of the political unity established by the Romans and the breaking up of the country into a multitude of petty states. This resulted from the imperfect nature of the conquest and from the loose feudal constitution of the Lombard monarchy, which was rather a group of virtually independent duchies than a real kingdom.

**207. The Anglo-Saxons in Britain.** We have already seen how in the time of Rome's distress the Angles and Saxons secured a footing in Britain (sect. 170). By the close of the sixth century the invading bands had set up in the island eight or nine or perhaps more kingdoms — frequently designated, though somewhat inaccurately, as the *Heptarchy*. For the space of two hundred years there was an almost perpetual strife for supremacy among the leading states. Finally, Egbert, king of Wessex (802-839 A.D.), brought all the other



kingdoms to a subject or tributary condition, and became in reality — though he seems never, save on one occasion, to have actually assumed the title — the first king of England.

**208. Teutonic Tribes outside the Empire.** We have now spoken of the most important of the Teutonic tribes which forced themselves within the limits of the Roman Empire in the West, and that there, upon the ruins of the civilization they had overthrown, laid or helped to lay the foundations of the modern nations of Italy, Spain, France, and England. Beyond the boundaries of the old Empire were still other tribes and clans of this same mighty family of nations — tribes and clans that were destined to play great parts in European history.

On the east, beyond the Rhine, were the ancestors of the modern Germans. Notwithstanding the immense hosts that the forests and morasses of Germany had poured into the Roman provinces, the western portion of the fatherland,<sup>1</sup> in the sixth century of our era, seemed still as crowded as before the great migration began. These tribes were yet barbarians in manners, and, for the most part, pagans in religion. In the northwest of Europe were the Scandinavians, the ancestors of the modern Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians. They were as yet untouched either by the civilization or the religion of Rome.

**Selections from the Sources.** *The Letters of Cassiodorus* (Thomas Hodgkin's trans.), bk. i, letters 24, 35; bk. ii, letters 32, 34; bk. iii, letters 17, 19, 29, 31, 43; bk. xi, letters 12, 13; bk. xii, letter 20. (These letters are invaluable in showing what was the general condition of things in the transition period between ancient and mediæval times.)

**References (Modern).** HODGKIN, *Italy and her Invaders* and *Theodoric the Goth* (Hodgkin is recognized as the best authority on the period of the migration). GUMMERE, *Germanic Origins* (an authoritative and interesting work on the early culture of the Germans). GIBBON, chaps. xxxviii, xxxix. CHURCH, *The Beginning of the Middle Ages*, chaps. i-v. EMERTON, *An Introduction to the Study of the Middle Ages*, chaps. vi, vii. *The Cambridge Mediæval History*, vol. i, chap. xv; vol. ii, chaps. iv-vii.

**Topics for Class Reports.** 1. Life and work of Cassiodorus; his state papers: Hodgkin, *Theodoric*, chap. ix, pp. 160-173. 2. The German conquest of Gaul: Adams, *The Growth of the French Nation*, chap. ii.

<sup>1</sup> The Slavs had pushed into the eastern parts of Germany.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE CHURCH AND ITS INSTITUTIONS

#### I. THE CONVERSION OF THE BARBARIANS

**209. Introductory.** The most important event in the history of the tribes that took possession of the Roman Empire in the West was their conversion to Christianity. Many of the barbarians were converted before or soon after their entrance into the Empire; to this circumstance the Roman provinces owed their immunity from the excessive cruelties which pagan barbarians seldom fail to inflict upon a subjected enemy. Alaric left untouched the treasures of the churches of the Roman Christians because his own faith was also Christian (sect. 167). For like reason the Vandal king Geiseric yielded to the prayers of Pope Leo the Great and promised to leave to the inhabitants of the Imperial City their lives (sect. 173). The more tolerable fate of Italy, Spain, and Gaul, as compared with the hard fate of Britain, is owing, in part at least, to the fact that the tribes which overran those countries had become, in the main, converts to Christianity before they crossed the boundaries of the Empire, while the Saxons, when they entered Britain, were still untamed pagans.

**210. Conversion of the Goths, Vandals, and Other Tribes.** The first converts to Christianity among the barbarians beyond the limits of the Empire were won from among the Goths. Foremost of the apostles that arose among them was Ulfilas, who translated the Scriptures into the Gothic language, omitting from his version, however, the Books of the Kings, as he feared that the stirring recital of wars and battles in that portion of the Word might kindle into too fierce a flame the martial ardor of his new converts.

What happened in the case of the Goths happened also in the case of most of the barbarian tribes that participated in the overthrow of the Roman Empire in the West. By the time of the fall of Rome the

Goths, the Vandals, the Suevi, and the Burgundians had become proselytes to Christianity. They, however, professed the Arian creed, which had been condemned by the great council of the Church held at Nicæa during the reign of Constantine the Great (sect. 154). Hence they were regarded as heretics by the Catholic Church, and all had to be reconverted to the orthodox creed. This good work was gradually and almost perfectly accomplished.

The remaining Teutonic tribes of whose conversion we shall speak — the Franks, the Anglo-Saxons, and the chief tribes of Germany — embraced at the outset the orthodox Catholic faith.

**211. Conversion of the Franks.** The Franks, when they entered the Empire, like the Angles and Saxons when they landed in Britain, were still pagans. Christianity gained way very slowly among them until a supposed interposition by the Christian God in their behalf led the king and nation to adopt the new religion in place of their old faith. The circumstances, as reported by tradition, were these. In a terrible battle between the Alemanni and the Franks under their king Clovis, the situation of the Franks at length became desperate. Then Clovis, falling upon his knees, called upon the God of the Christians, and vowed that if he would give victory to his arms he would become his follower. The battle turned in favor of the Franks, and Clovis, faithful to his vow, was baptized, and with him three thousand of his warriors (496 A.D.).

This story of the conversion of Clovis and his Franks illustrates how the barbarians' belief in omens and divine interpositions, and particularly their feeling that if their gods did not do for them all they wanted done they had a right to set them aside and choose others in their stead, contributed to their conversion, and how the reception of the new faith was often a tribal or national affair rather than a matter of personal conviction.

**212. Importance of the Conversion of the Franks.** "The conversion of the Franks," says the historian Milman, "was the most important event in its remote as well as its immediate consequences in European history." It was of such moment for the reason that the Franks embraced the orthodox Catholic faith, while almost all the other German invaders of the Empire had embraced the heretical

Arian creed. This secured them the loyalty of their Roman subjects and also gained for them the official favor of the Church of Rome. Thus was laid the basis of the ascendancy in the West of the Frankish kings.

**213. Augustine's Mission to England.** In the year 596 A.D. Pope Gregory I sent the monk Augustine with a band of forty companions to teach the Christian faith in Britain, in whose people he had become interested through seeing in the slave market at Rome some fair-faced captives from that remote region.

The monks were favorably received by the English, who listened attentively to the story the strangers had come to tell them, and being persuaded that the tidings were true, they burned the temples of Woden and Thor, and were in large numbers baptized in the Christian faith.

One of the most important consequences of the conversion of Britain was the reestablishment of that connection of the island with Roman civilization which had been severed by the calamities of the fifth century.

**214. The Conversion of Ireland.** The spiritual conquest of Ireland was effected largely by a zealous priest named Patricius (died about 469 A.D.), better known as St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. With such success were his labors attended that by the time of his death a great part of the island had embraced the Christian faith. Never did any race receive the Gospel with more ardent enthusiasm. The Irish or Celtic Church sent out its devoted missionaries into the Pictish highlands, into the forests of Germany, and into the wilds of Alps and Apennines.

Among the numerous religious houses founded by the Celtic missionaries was the famous monastery established 563 A.D. by the Irish monk St. Columba, on the little isle of Iona, just off the Pictish coast. Iona became a most renowned center of Christian learning and missionary zeal, and for almost two centuries was the point from which radiated light through the darkness of the surrounding heathenism.

**215. The Conversion of Germany.** The conversion of the tribes of Germany was effected chiefly by Celtic, Anglo-Saxon, and Frankish missionaries. The great apostle of Germany was the Saxon Winfrid,

better known as St. Boniface, who was born about 688 A.D. During a long and intensely active life he founded schools and monasteries, organized churches, preached and baptized, and at last died a martyr's death (753 A.D.). Through him, as says Milman, the Saxon invasion of England flowed back upon the Continent.<sup>1</sup>

**216. Reaction of Paganism on Christianity.** Thus were the conquerors of the Empire met and conquered by Christianity. The victory, it must be confessed, was in a great degree a victory rather in name than in fact. The Church could not all at once leaven the great mass of heathenism which had so suddenly been brought within its pale. For a long time after they were called Christians, the barbarians, coarse and cruel and self-willed and superstitious as they were, understood very little of the doctrines and exhibited still less of the true spirit of the religion they professed. To this depressing reaction of Teutonic barbarism upon the Church is, without doubt, to be attributed in large measure the deplorable moral state of Europe during so large a part of mediæval times.

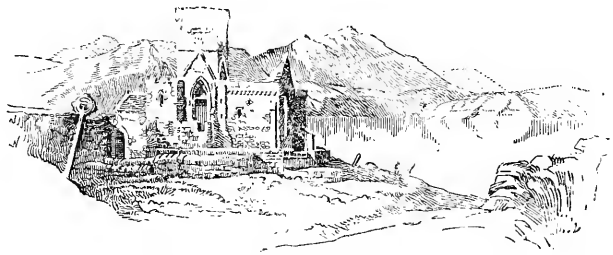


FIG. 56. RUINS OF THE CELEBRATED MONASTERY OF IONA. (After an old drawing)

"That man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona."—  
Dr. Johnson, *A Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland*

## II. THE RISE OF MONASTICISM

**217. Monasticism Defined ; St. Anthony, " the Father of the Hermits."** It was during the period between the third and the sixth century that there grew up in the Church the institution known as Monasticism. This was so remarkable a system, and one that exerted so profound an influence upon mediæval and even later history, that we must here acquaint ourselves with at least its spirit and aims.

<sup>1</sup> The story of the conversion of the Scandinavian peoples, of the Eastern Slavs, and of the Hungarians belongs to a later period than that embraced by our present survey.

The term *monasticism*, in its widest application, denotes a life of austere self-denial and of seclusion from the world, with the object of promoting the interests of the soul. As thus defined, the system embraced two prominent classes of ascetics: (1) hermits or anchorites — persons who, retiring from the world, lived solitary lives in desolate places; (2) cenobites or monks, who formed communities and lived usually under a common roof.

St. Anthony, an Egyptian ascetic (born about 251 A.D.), who by his example and influence gave a tremendous impulse to the strange enthusiasm, is called the "father of the hermits." The romance of his life, written by the celebrated Athanasius, stirred the whole Christian world and led thousands to renounce society and in imitation of the saint to flee to the desert. It is estimated that before the close of the fourth century the population of the desert in many districts in Egypt was equal to that of the cities.

**218. Monasticism in the West.** During the fourth century the anchorite type of asceticism, which was favored by the mild climate of the Eastern lands and especially by that of Egypt, assumed in some degree the monastic form; that is to say, the fame of this or that anchorite or hermit drew about him a number of disciples, whose rude huts or cells formed what was known as a *laura*, the nucleus of a monastery.

Soon after the cenobite system had been established in the East it was introduced into Europe, and in an astonishingly short space of time spread throughout all the Western countries where Christianity had gained a foothold. Here it prevailed to the almost total exclusion of the hermit mode of life. Monasteries arose on every side. The number that fled to these retreats was vastly augmented by the disorder and terror attending the invasion of the barbarians and the overthrow of the Empire in the West.

**219. The Rule of St. Benedict.** With a view to introducing some sort of regularity into the practices and austerities of the monks, rules were early prescribed for their observance. The three essential requirements or vows of the monk were poverty, chastity, and obedience.

The greatest legislator of the monks was St. Benedict of Nursia (480–543 A.D.), the founder of the celebrated monastery of Monte

Cassino, situated midway between Rome and Naples in Italy. His code was to the religious world what the *Corpus Juris Civilis* of Justinian (sect. 192) was to the lay society of Europe. Many of his rules were most wise and practical, as, for instance, one that made manual work a pious duty, and another that required the monk to spend an allotted time each day in sacred reading.

The monks who subjected themselves to the rule of St. Benedict were known as Benedictines. The order became immensely popular. At one time it embraced about forty thousand abbeys.

**220. Services Rendered by the Monks to Civilization.** The early establishment of the monastic system in the Church resulted in great advantages to the new world that was shaping itself out of the ruins of the old. The monks, especially the Benedictines, became agriculturists, and by patient labor converted the wild and marshy lands which they received as gifts from princes and others into fruitful fields, thus redeeming from barrenness some of the most desolate districts of Europe. The monks, in a word, formed the vanguard of civilization towards the wilderness.

The monks also became missionaries, and it was largely to their zeal and devotion that the Church owed her speedy and signal victory over the barbarians.

The quiet air of the monasteries nourished learning as well as piety. The monks became teachers, and under the shelter of the monasteries established schools which were the nurseries of learning during the earlier Middle Ages and the centers for centuries of the best intellectual life of Europe.

The monks also became copyists, and with great painstaking and industry gathered and multiplied ancient manuscripts, and thus preserved and transmitted to the modern world much classical learning

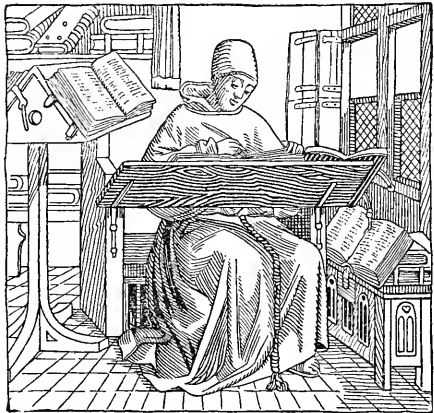


FIG. 57. A MONK COPYIST. (From a manuscript of the fifteenth century)

and literature that would otherwise have been lost. Almost all the remains of the Greek and Latin classics that we possess have come to us through the agency of the monks.

The monks became, further, the almoners of the pious and the wealthy, and distributed alms to the poor and needy. Everywhere the monasteries opened their hospitable doors to the weary, the sick, and the discouraged. In a word, these retreats were the inns, the asylums, and the hospitals of the mediæval ages.

### III. THE RISE OF THE PAPACY

**221. The Empire within the Empire.** Long before the fall of Rome there had begun to grow up within the Roman Empire an ecclesiastical state, which in its constitution and its administrative system was shaping itself upon the imperial model. This spiritual empire, like the secular empire, possessed a hierarchy of officers, of which deacons, priests or presbyters, and bishops were the most important. The bishops collectively formed what is known as the episcopate. There were four grades of bishops, namely, country bishops, city bishops, metropolitans or archbishops, and patriarchs. At the end of the fourth century there were five patriarchates, that is, regions ruled by patriarchs. These centered in the great cities of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem.

Among the patriarchs, the patriarchs of Rome were accorded almost universally a precedence in honor and dignity. They claimed further a precedence in authority and jurisdiction, and this was already very widely recognized. Before the close of the eighth century there was firmly established over a great part of Christendom what we may call an ecclesiastical monarchy.

Besides the influence of great men—such as Leo the Great, Gregory the Great, and Nicholas I—who held the seat of St. Peter, there were various historical circumstances that contributed to the realization by the Roman bishops of their claim to supremacy. In the following paragraphs we shall speak briefly of several of these favoring circumstances. These matters constitute the great landmarks in the rise and early growth of the Papacy.



**222. The Belief in the Primacy of St. Peter and in the Founding by him of the Church at Rome.** It came to be believed that the apostle Peter had been given by the Master a sort of primacy among his fellow apostles. It also came to be believed that Peter himself had founded the church at Rome, and had suffered martyrdom there under the emperor Nero.

These beliefs and interpretations of history, which make the Roman bishops the successors of Peter and the holders of his seat, contributed greatly to enhance their reputation and to justify their claim to a primacy of authority over all the dignitaries of the Church.

**223. Advantages of their Position at the Political Center of the World.** The claims of the Roman bishops were in the early centuries greatly favored by the spell in which the world was held by the name and prestige of imperial Rome. Thence it had been accustomed to receive commands in all temporal matters; how very natural, then, that thither it should turn for command and guidance in spiritual affairs.

The Roman bishops in thus occupying the geographical and political center of the world enjoyed a great advantage over all other bishops and patriarchs. The halo that during many centuries of wonderful history had gathered about the Eternal City came naturally to invest with a kind of aureole the head of the Christian bishop.

**224. Effect of the Removal of the Imperial Government to Constantinople.** Nor was this advantage that was given the Roman bishops by their position at Rome lost when the old capital ceased to be an imperial city. The removal, by the acts of Diocletian and Constantine, of the chief seat of the government to the East, instead of diminishing the power and dignity of the Roman bishops, tended greatly to promote their claims and authority. It left the pontiff the foremost personage in Rome.

**225. The Pastor as Protector of Rome.** Again, when the barbarians came, there came another occasion for the Roman bishops to widen their influence and enhance their authority. Rome's extremity was their opportunity. Thus it will be recalled how mainly through the intercession of the pious Pope Leo the Great the fierce Attila was

persuaded to turn back and spare the Imperial City (sect. 167); and how the same bishop, in the year 455 A.D., also appeased in a measure the wrath of the Vandal Geiseric and shielded the inhabitants from the worst passions of a barbarian soldiery (sect. 173).

Thus when the emperors, the natural defenders of the capital, were unable to protect it, the unarmed Pastor was able, through the awe and reverence inspired by his holy office, to render services that could not but result in bringing increased honor and dignity to the Roman see.

**226. Effects upon the Papacy of the Extinction of the Roman Empire in the West.** But if the misfortunes of the Empire in the West tended to the enhancement of the reputation and influence of the Roman bishops, much more did its final downfall tend to the same end.

Thus, upon the surrender of the sovereignty of the West into the hands of the emperor of the East, the bishops of Rome became the most important personages in western Europe, and, being so far removed from the court at Constantinople, gradually assumed almost imperial powers. They became the arbiters between the barbarian chiefs and the Italians, and to them were referred for decision the disputes arising between cities, states, and kings. Especially did the bishops and archbishops throughout the West in their contests with the Arian barbarian rulers look to Rome for advice and help. It is easy to see how greatly these things tended to strengthen the authority and increase the influence of the Roman bishops.

**227. The Missions of Rome.** Again, the early missionary zeal of the Church of Rome made her the mother of many churches, all of whom looked up to her with affectionate and grateful loyalty. Thus the Angles and Saxons, won to the faith by the missionaries of Rome, conceived a deep veneration for the holy see and became its most devoted children. To Rome it was that the Christian Britons made their most frequent pilgrimages, and thither they sent their offering of St. Peter's pence. And when the Saxons became missionaries to their pagan kinsmen of the Continent, they transplanted into the heart of Germany these same feelings of filial attachment and love.

**228. Result of the Fall of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria before the Saracens.** In the seventh century all the great cities of the East fell into the hands of the Mohammedans.<sup>1</sup> This was a matter of tremendous consequence for the Church of Rome, since in every one of these great capitals there was, or might have been, a rival of the Roman bishop. The virtual erasure of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria from the map of Christendom left only one city, Constantinople, that could possibly nourish a rival of the Roman Church. Thus did the very misfortunes of Christendom give an added security to the ever-increasing authority of the Roman prelate.

**229. The Popes become Temporal Sovereigns.** A dispute about the use of images in worship, known in church history as the "War of the Iconoclasts,"<sup>2</sup> which broke out in the eighth century between the Greek churches of the East and the Latin churches of the West, drew after it far-reaching consequences as respects the growing power of the Roman pontiffs.

Leo the Isaurian, who came to the throne of Constantinople 716 A.D., was a most zealous iconoclast. The Greek churches of the East having been cleared of images, the emperor resolved to clear also the Latin churches of the West of these "symbols of idolatry." To this end he issued a decree that they should not be used. The bishop of Rome, Pope Gregory II, not only opposed the execution of the edict, but by the ban of excommunication cut off the emperor and all the iconoclastic churches of the East from communion with the true Catholic Church.

In this quarrel with the Eastern emperors the Roman bishops formed an alliance with the Frankish princes of the Carolingian house. We shall a little later tell briefly the story of this alliance.<sup>3</sup> Never did allies render themselves more serviceable to each other. The popes consecrated the Frankish chieftains as kings and emperors; the grateful Frankish kings defended the popes against all their enemies, imperial and barbarian, and dowering them with cities and provinces, laid the basis of their temporal power.

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XVI.

<sup>2</sup> *Iconoclast* means "image breaker."

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter XVII.

Such in broad outline was the way in which grew up the Papacy, an institution which, far beyond all others, was destined to mold the fortunes and direct the activities of Western Christendom throughout the mediæval time.

**Selections from the Sources.** BEDE, *Ecclesiastical History*, bk. i, chaps. xxiii-xxv; bk. ii, chaps. i, xiii; bk. iii, chaps. iii, xxv. *Translations and Reprints* (University of Pennsylvania), vol. ii, No. 7, "Life of Saint Columban" (an instructive biography of an Irish monk; the subject of this biography is sometimes named Columba the Younger, to distinguish him from St. Columba of Iona). Henderson's *Select Documents of the Middle Ages*, pp. 274-314, "The Rule of Saint Benedict"; Robinson's *Readings*, vol. i, chaps. iv, v; Ogg's *Source Book of Mediæval History*, chap. vi.

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## CHAPTER XIV

### THE FUSION OF LATIN AND TEUTON

**230. Introductory.** The conversion of the barbarians and the development in Western Christendom of the central authority of the Papacy prepared the way for the introduction among the Northern races of the arts and the culture of Rome, and hastened in Italy, Spain, and Gaul the fusion into a single people of the Latins and the Teutons, of which important matter we shall treat in the present chapter. We shall tell how these two races, upon the soil of the old Empire in the West, intermingled their blood, their languages, their laws, their usages and customs, to form new peoples, new tongues, and new institutions.

**231. The Romance Nations.** In some districts the barbarian invaders and the Roman provincials were kept apart for a long time by the bitter antagonism of race, and by a sense of injury on the one hand and a feeling of disdainful superiority on the other. But for the most part the Teutonic intruders and the Latin-speaking inhabitants of Italy, Spain, and France very soon began freely to mingle their blood by family alliances.

It is quite impossible to say what proportion the Teutons bore to the Romans. Of course the proportion varied in the different countries. In none of the countries named, however, was it large enough to absorb the Latinized population; on the contrary, the barbarians were themselves absorbed, yet not without essentially changing the body into which they were incorporated. Thus, about the end of the fourth century everything in Italy, Spain, and France — dwellings, cities, dress, customs, language, laws, soldiers — reminds us of Rome. A little later and a great change has taken place. The barbarians have come in. For a time we see everywhere, jostling each other in the streets and markets, crowding each other in the theaters and courts, kneeling together in the churches, the former

Romanized subjects of the Empire and their uncouth Teutonic conquerors. But by the close of the ninth century, to speak in very general terms, the two elements have become quite intimately blended, and a century or two later Roman and Teuton have alike disappeared, and we are introduced to Italians, Spaniards, and Frenchmen. These we call Romance nations, because at base they are Roman.

**232. The Formation of the Romance Languages.** During the five centuries of their subjection to Rome, the natives of Spain and Gaul forgot their barbarous dialects and came to speak a corrupt Latin. Now in exactly the same way that the dialects of the Celtic tribes of Gaul and of the Celtiberians of Spain had given way to the more refined speech of the Romans did the rude languages of the Teutons yield to the more cultured speech of the Roman provincials. In the course of two or three centuries after their entrance into the Empire, Goths, Lombards, Burgundians, and Franks had, in a large measure, dropped their own tongue and were speaking that of the people they had subjected.

But of course this provincial Latin underwent a great change upon the lips of the mixed descendants of the Romans and Teutons. Owing to the absence of a common popular literature, the changes that took place in one country did not exactly correspond to those going on in another. Hence, in the course of time, we find different dialects springing up, and by about the ninth century the Latin has virtually disappeared as a spoken language, and its place been usurped by what will be known as the Italian, Spanish, and French languages—all more or less resembling the ancient Latin, and all called Romance tongues, because children of the old Roman speech.

**233. The Barbarian Codes.** The Teutonic tribes, before they entered the Roman Empire, had no written laws. As soon as they settled in the provinces, however, they began, in imitation of the Romans, to frame their rules and customs into codes. In some countries, particularly in Spain and Italy, this work was under the supervision of the clergy, and hence the codes of the Teutonic peoples in these countries were a sort of fusion of Roman principles and barbarian practices. But in general these early compilations of laws—they were made, for the most part, between the sixth and

ninth centuries — were not so essentially modified by Latin influence but that they serve as valuable and instructive memorials of the customs, ideals, and social arrangements of the Teutonic peoples.

**234. The Personal Character of the Teutonic Laws.** The laws of the barbarians, instead of being territorial as with us, were generally personal; that is, instead of all the inhabitants of a given country being subject to the same laws, there were different ones for the different classes of society. The Latins, for instance, were subject in private law only to the old Roman code, while the Teutons lived under the tribal rules and regulations which they had brought with them from beyond the Rhine and the Danube. The curious state of things resulting from this personality of law, as it is called, is vividly pictured by the following observation of a chronicler: "For it would often happen," he says, "that five men would be sitting or walking together, not one of whom would have the same law with any other."

Even among themselves the Teutons knew nothing of the modern legal maxim that all should stand equal before the law. The penalty inflicted upon the evil-doer depended not upon the nature of his crime but upon his rank or that of the party injured. Thus slaves and serfs were beaten and put to death for minor offenses, while a freeman might atone for any crime, even for murder, by the payment of a fine, the amount of the penalty being determined by the rank of the victim.

**235. Ordeals.** The agencies relied upon by the Germans to ascertain the guilt or innocence of accused persons show in how rude a state the administration of justice among them was. One very common method of proof was by what were called ordeals, in which the question was submitted to the judgment of God. Of these the chief were the *ordeal by fire*, the *ordeal by water*, and the *wager of battle*.

The ordeal by fire consisted in taking in the hand a piece of red-hot iron, or in walking blindfolded with bare feet over a row of hot ploughshares laid lengthwise at irregular distances. If the person escaped unharmed, he was held to be innocent. Another way of performing the fire ordeal was by running through the flame of two fires built close together, or by walking over live brands.

The ordeal by water was of two kinds, by hot water and by cold. In the hot-water ordeal the accused person thrust his arm into boiling water, and if no hurt was visible upon the arm three days after the operation, the party was considered guiltless. In the cold-water trial the suspected person was thrown into a stream or pond; if he floated, he was held to be guilty; if he sank, innocent. The water, it was believed, would reject the guilty but receive the innocent into

its bosom.

The wager of battle or trial by combat was a solemn judicial duel. It was resorted to in the belief that God would give victory to the right. Naturally it was a favorite mode of trial among a people who found their chief delight in fighting. Even religious disputes were sometimes settled in this way.

The ordeal was frequently performed by deputy, that is, one person for hire or for the sake of friendship

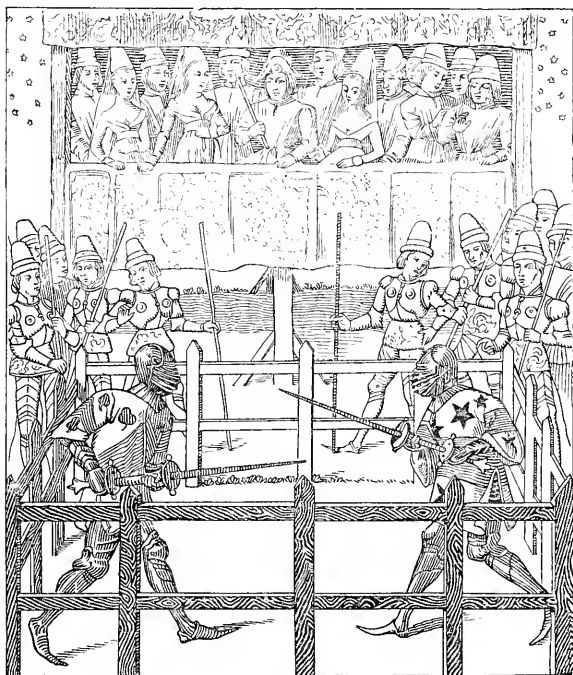


FIG. 58. TRIAL BY COMBAT. (From a manuscript of the fifteenth century; after *Lacroix*)

would undertake it for another; hence the expression "to go through fire and water to serve one." Especially was such substitution common in the judicial duel, since women and ecclesiastics were generally forbidden to appear personally in the lists.

**236. The Revival of the Roman Law.** Now the barbarian law system, if such it can be called, the character of which we have merely suggested by the preceding illustrations, gradually displaced the Roman law in all those countries where the two systems at first existed alongside each other, save in Italy and in southern France,



where the provincials greatly outnumbered the invaders. But the admirable jurisprudence of Rome was eventually to assert its superiority. About the close of the eleventh century there was a great revival in the study of the Roman law as embodied in the Justinian code, and in the course of a century or two this became either the groundwork or a strong modifying element in the law systems of almost all the peoples of Europe.

What took place may be illustrated by reference to the fate of the Teutonic languages in Gaul, Italy, and Spain. As the barbarian tongues, after maintaining a place in those countries for two or three centuries, at length gave place to the superior Latin, which became the basis of the new Romance languages, so now in the domain of law the barbarian maxims and customs, though holding their place longer, likewise finally give way almost everywhere, in a greater or less degree, to the more excellent law system of the Empire. Rome must fulfill her destiny and give laws to the nations.

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## CHAPTER XV

### THE ROMAN EMPIRE IN THE EAST

**237. The Era of Justinian (527-565 A.D.).** Throughout the half century and more following the sack of Rome by the Vandals (sect. 173), the Eastern emperors struggled hard and sometimes doubtfully to withstand the waves of the barbarian inundation which constantly threatened to overwhelm Constantinople with the same awful calamities that had befallen the Imperial City of the West. Had the New Rome—the destined refuge for a thousand years of Græco-Roman learning and culture—also gone down at this time before the storm, the loss to the cause of civilization would have been incalculable.

Fortunately, in the year 527 A.D., there ascended the Eastern throne a prince of unusual ability, to whom fortune gave a general of such rare genius that his name has been allotted a place in the short list of the great commanders of the world. Justinian was the name of the prince, and Belisarius that of the soldier. The sovereign has given name to the period, which is called after him the "Era of Justinian."

**238. Justinian as the Restorer of the Empire and the "Lawgiver of Civilization."** One of the most important matters in the reign of Justinian is what is termed the "Imperial Restoration," by which is meant the recovery from the barbarians of several of the provinces of the West upon which they had seized. Africa, as we have seen (sect. 204), was first wrested from the Vandals. Italy was next recovered from the Goths and again made a part of the Roman Empire (553 A.D.). Besides recovering from the barbarians Africa and Italy, Justinian also reconquered from the Visigoths the south-eastern part of Spain.

But that which gives Justinian's reign a greater distinction than any conferred upon it by the achievements of his great generals was the collection and publication by him of the *Corpus Juris Civilis*, the

"Body of the Roman Law." This work, as we have already learned (sect. 192), embodied all the law knowledge of the ancient Romans, and was the most precious legacy of Rome to the world. In causing its publication, Justinian earned the title of the "Lawgiver of Civilization."<sup>1</sup>

**239. The Empire becomes Greek.** Less than a generation after the death of Justinian, the Arabs, of whom we shall tell in the following chapter, entered upon their surprising career of conquest, which in a short time completely changed the face of the entire East.



THE ROMAN EMPIRE UNDER JUSTINIAN

The conquests of the Arabs cut off from the Empire those provinces that had the smallest Greek element, and thus rendered the population subject to the emperor more homogeneous, more thoroughly Greek. The Roman element disappeared, and though the government still retained the imperial character impressed upon it by the conquerors of the world, the court of Constantinople became Greek in tone, spirit, and manners. Hence, instead of longer applying to the Empire the designation *Roman*, many historians from this on call it the *Greek* or *Byzantine* Empire.

<sup>1</sup> Justinian also earned renown as one of the world's greatest builders. He rebuilt with increased splendor the church of Santa Sophia, which, founded by Constantine the Great, had been burned during a riot in his reign. The structure still stands, though the cross which originally surmounted the dome was in 1453 replaced by the Moslem crescent. In its interior decorations this edifice is regarded as one of the most beautiful creations of Christian art.

**240. Services Rendered European Civilization by the Roman Empire in the East.**<sup>1</sup> The later Roman Empire rendered such eminent services to the European world that it justly deserves an important place in universal history. First, as a military outpost it held the Eastern frontier of European civilization for a thousand years against Asiatic barbarism.

Second, it was the keeper for centuries of the treasures of ancient civilization and the instructor of the new Western nations in law, in government and administration, in literature, in painting, in architecture, and in the industrial arts.

Third, it kept alive the imperial idea and principle, and gave this fruitful idea and this molding principle back to the West in the time of Charlemagne. Without the later Roman Empire of the East there would never have been a Romano-German Empire of the West (sect. 257).

Fourth, it was the teacher of religion and civilization to the Slavic races of Eastern Europe. Russia forms part of the civilized world to-day largely by virtue of what she received from New Rome.

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**Topics for Class Reports.** 1. Justinian as a builder; St. Sophia: Oman, *The Byzantine Empire*, chap. viii, pp. 106–111; Gibbon, chap. xl (consult table of contents). 2. Introduction into Europe of the silk industry: Gibbon, chap. xl (consult table of contents). 3. The Hippodrome and the "Blues" and the "Greens": Oman, *The Byzantine Empire*, chap. ii, pp. 22–25; chap. vi, pp. 75–80.

<sup>1</sup> See Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire*, vol. ii, chap. xiv.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE RISE OF ISLAM

**241. The Attack from the South upon Ancient Civilization.** We have seen the German barbarians of the North descend upon and wrest from the Roman Empire all its provinces in the West. We are now to watch a similar attack made upon the Empire by the Arabs of the South, and to see wrested from the emperors of the East a large part of the lands still remaining under their rule.<sup>1</sup>

**242. The Religious Condition of Arabia before Mohammed.** Before the reforms of Mohammed the Arabs were idolaters. Their holy city was Mecca. Here was the ancient and most revered shrine of the Kaaba,<sup>2</sup> where was preserved a sacred black stone that was believed to have been given by an angel to Abraham. To this Meccan shrine pilgrimages were made from the most remote parts of Arabia.

But though polytheism was the prevailing religion of Arabia, still there were in the land many followers of other faiths. The Jews especially were to be found in some parts of the peninsula in great numbers, having been driven from Palestine by the Roman persecutions. From them the Arab teachers had been made acquainted with the doctrine of one sole God. From the numerous Christian converts dwelling among them they had learned something of the doctrines of Christianity.

**243. Mohammed.** Mohammed, the great prophet of the Arabs, was born in the holy city of Mecca, probably in the year 570 A.D. In his early years he was a shepherd and a watcher of flocks by night, as the great religious teachers Moses and David had been before him. Later he became a merchant and a camel driver.

<sup>1</sup> The student should make a careful comparative study of the maps after pp. 113, 153, 181.

<sup>2</sup> So named from its having the shape of a cube.

Mohammed possessed a soul that was early and deeply stirred by the contemplation of those themes that ever attract the religious mind. He declared that he had visions in which the angel Gabriel appeared to him and made to him revelations which he was commanded to make known to his fellow men. The essence of the new faith which he was to teach was this: There is but one God, and Mohammed is his prophet.

For a considerable time after having received this commission, Mohammed endeavored to gain adherents merely by persuasion; but

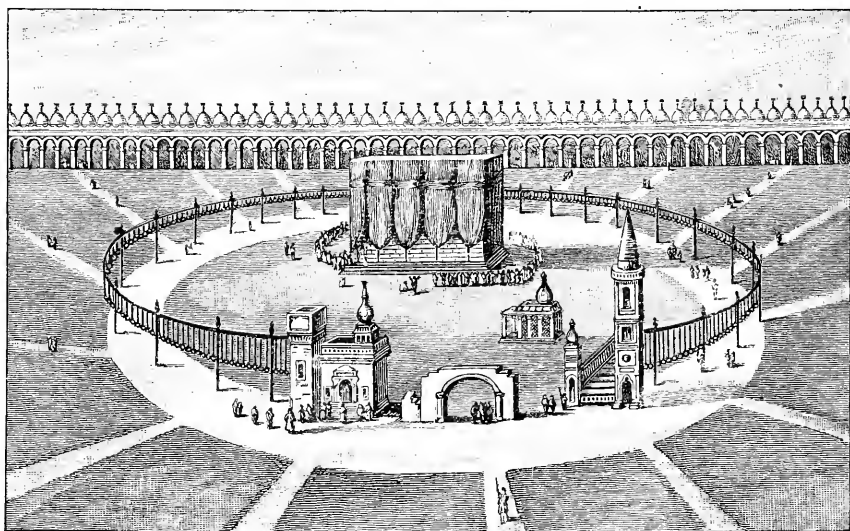


FIG. 59. THE KAABA AT MECCA. (From a drawing)

such was the incredulity which he everywhere met, that at the end of three years' preaching his disciples numbered only forty persons.

**244. The Hegira (622 A.D.).** The teachings of Mohammed at last aroused the anger of a powerful party among the guardians of the national idols of the Kaaba, and they began to persecute Mohammed and his followers. To escape these persecutions Mohammed fled to the neighboring city of Medina. This *Hegira*, or "flight," as the word signifies, occurred 622 A.D., and was considered by the Moslems as such an important event in the history of their religion that they adopted it as the beginning of a new era, and from it still continue to reckon historical dates.

**245. The Faith Extended by the Sword.** His cause being warmly espoused by the inhabitants of Medina, Mohammed now assumed along with the character of a lawgiver and moral teacher that of a warrior. He declared it to be the will of God that the new faith should be spread by the sword.

The year following the Hegira he began to attack and plunder caravans. The flame of a sacred war was soon kindled. Warriors from all quarters flocked to the standard of the prophet. Their reckless enthusiasm was intensified by the assurance that death met in fighting those who resisted the true faith insured the martyr immediate entrance upon the joys of paradise. Within ten years from the time of the assumption of the sword by Mohammed, Mecca had been conquered and the new creed established widely among the independent tribes of Arabia.

**246. The Koran and its Teachings.** The doctrines of Mohammedanism or Islam, which means "submission to God," are contained in the Koran, which is believed by the orthodox to have been written from all eternity on tablets in heaven. From time to time Mohammed recited to his disciples portions of the "heavenly book" as its contents were revealed to him in his dreams and visions. These communications were held in the "breasts of men," or were written down upon pieces of pottery, the broad shoulder-bones of sheep, and the ribs of palm leaves.<sup>1</sup> Soon after the death of the prophet these scraps of writing were religiously collected, supplemented by tradition, and then arranged chiefly according to length. Such was the origin of the sacred book of Islam.

The fundamental doctrine of Islam is the unity of God: "There is no God save Allah" echoes through the Koran. To this is added the equally binding declaration that "Mohammed is the prophet of Allah."

The Koran inculcates the practice of four cardinal virtues or duties. The first is prayer; five times every day must the believer turn his face towards Mecca and engage in devotion. The second requirement is almsgiving, or payment of the so-called holy tax. The third is keeping the fast of Ramadan, which lasts a whole month,

<sup>1</sup> Palmer in the introduction to his translation of the Koran says that it is "probable Mohammed could neither read nor write."

throughout which period nothing must be eaten during the day. The fourth duty is making a pilgrimage to Mecca. Every person who can possibly do so is required to make this journey.

**247. The Conquest of Persia, Syria, Egypt, and North Africa.** For exactly one century after the death of Mohammed the caliphs or successors of the prophet<sup>1</sup> were engaged in an almost unbroken series of conquests. Persia was subjugated and the authority of the Koran was established throughout the land of the ancient fire-worshippers. Syria was wrested from the Eastern Roman Empire and Asia Minor was overrun. Egypt and North Africa, the latter just recently delivered from the Vandals (sect. 204), were also snatched from the hands of the Byzantine emperors.

By the conquest of Syria the birthplace of Christianity was lost to the Christian world. By the conquest of North Africa, lands whose history for a thousand years had been intertwined with that of the opposite shores of Europe, and which at one time seemed destined to share in the career of freedom and progress opening to the peoples of that continent, were drawn back into the fatalism and the stagnation of the East. From being an extension of Europe they became once more an extension of Asia.

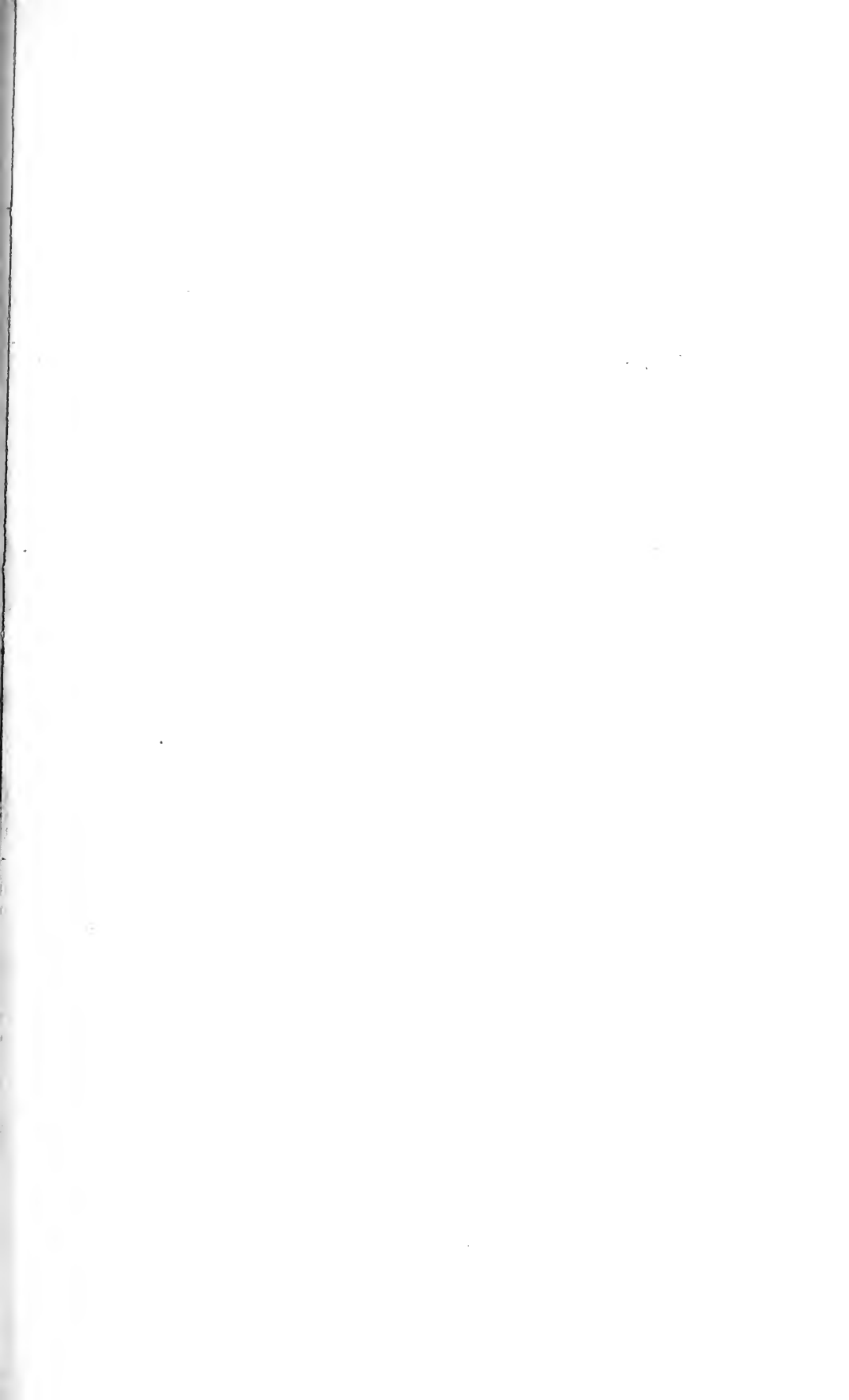
**248. Attacks upon Constantinople.** Thus in only a little more than fifty years from the death of Mohammed his standard had been carried by the lieutenants of his successors through Asia to the Hellespont on the one side and across Africa to the Straits of Gibraltar on the other. We may expect to see the Saracens at one or both of these points attempt the invasion of Europe.

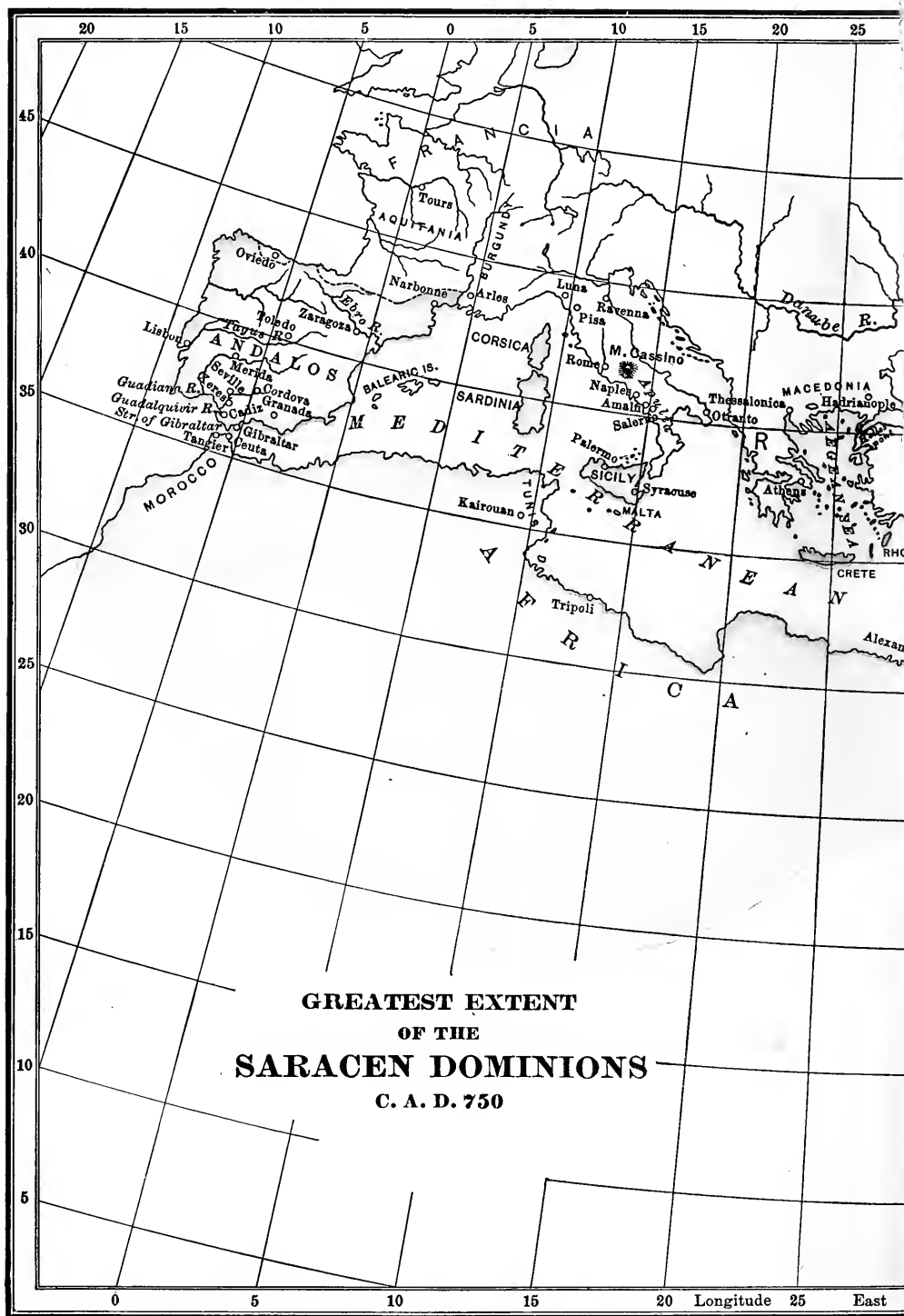
The first attempt was made in the East, where the Arabs vainly endeavored to gain control of the Bosphorus by wresting Constantinople from the hands of the Eastern emperors. This check that the Saracens received before Constantinople was doubtless next in importance for European civilization to the check given their conquering hordes a little later in France at the great battle of Tours.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Abu-Bekr (632-634 A.D.), Mohammed's father-in-law, was the first caliph. He was followed by Omar (634-644 A.D.), Othman (644-655 A.D.), and Ali (655-661 A.D.), all of whom fell by the hands of assassins. Ali was the last of the four so-called orthodox caliphs.

<sup>2</sup> Some historians regard it as even more important.











**249. The Conquest of Spain (711 A.D.).** While the Moslems were thus being repulsed from Europe at its eastern extremity, they succeeded in gaining a foothold in Spain. Roderic, the last of the Visigothic kings (sect. 203), was hopelessly defeated in battle, and all the peninsula, save some mountainous regions in the northwest, quickly submitted to the invaders. By this conquest some of the fairest provinces of Spain were lost to Christendom for a period of eight hundred years.

No sooner had the subjugation of the country been effected than multitudes of colonists from Arabia, Syria, and North Africa crowded into the peninsula, until in a short time the provinces of Seville, Cordova, Toledo, and Granada became predominantly Arabic in dress, manners, language, and religion.

**250. Invasion of France; Battle of Tours (732 A.D.).** Four or five years after the conquest of Spain the Saracens crossed the Pyrenees and established themselves upon the plains of Gaul. This advance of the Moslem host beyond the northern wall of Spain was viewed with the greatest alarm by all Christendom. It looked as though the followers of Mohammed would soon possess all the continent. As Draper pictures it, the Crescent, lying in a vast semicircle upon the northern shore of Africa and the curving coast of Asia, with one horn touching the Bosphorus and the other the Straits of Gibraltar, seemed about to round to the full and overspread all Europe.

In the year 732 A.D., just one hundred years after the death of the prophet, the Franks, under their leader Charles Martel, and their allies met the Moslems upon the plains of Tours in central Gaul and committed to the issue of a single battle the fate of Christendom and the future course of history. The Arabs suffered an overwhelming defeat and soon withdrew behind the Pyrenees.

The young Christian civilization of western Europe was thus delivered from an appalling danger such as had not threatened it since the fearful days of Attila and the Huns (sect. 171).

**251. The Dismemberment of the Caliphate.** "At the close of the first century of the Hegira," writes Gibbon, "the caliphs were the most potent and absolute monarchs of the globe." But in a short time the extended empire, through the quarrels of sectaries and the

ambitions of rival aspirants for the honors of the caliphate, was broken in fragments, and from three capitals — from Bagdad upon the Tigris, from Cairo upon the Nile, and from Cordova upon the Guadalquivir — were issued the commands of three rival caliphs, each of whom was regarded by his adherents as the sole rightful spiritual and civil successor of Mohammed. All, however, held the great prophet in the same reverence, all maintained with equal zeal the sacred character of the Koran, and all prayed with their faces turned toward the holy city of Mecca.

**252. The Civilization of Arabian Islam.** The Saracens were co-heirs of antiquity with the Germans. They made especially their own the scientific<sup>1</sup> accumulations of the ancient civilizations and bequeathed them to Christian Europe. From the Greeks and the Hindus they received the germs of astronomy, geometry, arithmetic, algebra, medicine, botany, and other sciences. The scientific writings of Aristotle, Euclid, and Galen, and Hindu treatises on astronomy and algebra were translated from the Greek and Sanskrit into Arabic, and formed the basis of the Arabian studies and investigations. Almost all of the sciences that thus came into their hands were improved and enriched by them, and then transmitted to European scholars.<sup>2</sup> They devised what is known from them as the Arabic or decimal system of notation,<sup>3</sup> and gave to Europe this indispensable instrument of all scientific investigations dependent upon mathematical calculations.

In the lighter forms of literature — romance and poetry — the Arabs produced much that possesses a high degree of excellence. The inimitable tales of the *Arabian Nights*, besides being a valuable

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon affirms that no Greek poet, orator, or historian was ever translated into Arabic. See *Decline and Fall*, chap. lii.

<sup>2</sup> What Europe received in science from Arabian sources is kept in remembrance by such words as *alchemy*, *alcohol*, *alembic*, *algebra*, *alkali*, *almanac*, *azimuth*, *chemistry*, *elixir*, *zenith*, and *nadir*. To how great an extent the chief Arabian cities became the manufacturing centers of the mediæval world is indicated by the names which these places have given to various textile fabrics and other articles. Thus *muslin* comes from Mosul, on the Tigris, *damask* from Damascus, and *gauze* from Gaza. Damascus and Toledo blades tell of the proficiency of the Arab workmen in metallurgy.

<sup>3</sup> The figures or numerals, with the exception of the zero symbol, employed in their system, they seem to have borrowed from India.

commentary on Arabian life and manners at the time of the culmination of oriental culture at the court of Bagdad, form also an addition to the imperishable portion of the literature of the world.

All this literary and scientific activity naturally found expression in the establishment of schools, universities, and libraries. In all the great cities of the Arabian empire, as at Bagdad, Cairo, and Cordova, centuries before Europe could boast anything beyond cathedral or monastic schools, great universities were drawing together vast crowds of eager young Moslems and creating an atmosphere of learning and refinement. The famous "university" at Cairo, which has at the present day an attendance of several thousand students, is a survival from the great days of Arabian Islam.

In the erection of mosques and other public edifices the Arab architects developed a new and striking style of architecture, — one of the most beautiful specimens of which is preserved to us in the palace of the Moorish kings at Granada, — a style which has given to modern builders some of their finest models.

**Selections from the Sources.** The Koran is our chief source for a knowledge of Islam as a religion. The translation by Palmer, in *Sacred Books of the East*, is the best. *The Speeches and Table-talk of the Prophet Mohammed* (chosen and translated by Stanley Lane-Poole). *European History Studies* (University of Nebraska), vol. ii, No. 3, "Selections from the Koran." Robinson's *Readings*, vol. i, chap. vi, pp. 114–120; Ogg's *Source Book of Mediæval History*, chap. vii.

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**Topics for Class Reports.** 1. Mohammed: Carlyle, *Heroes and Hero-worship*, lect. ii, "The Hero as Prophet." 2. Some teachings of Islam: Gilman, *The Saracens*, chap. xv. 3. Selected tales from the *Arabian Nights*.

## CHAPTER XVII

### CHARLEMAGNE AND THE RESTORATION OF THE EMPIRE IN THE WEST

**253. Introductory.** We return now to the West. The Franks, who with the aid of their confederates withstood the advance of the Saracens upon the field of Tours and saved Europe from subjection to the Koran, are the people that first attract our attention. Among them it is that a man appears who makes the first grand attempt to restore the laws, the order, the institutions of the ancient Romans. Charlemagne or Charles the Great, their king, is the imposing figure that moves amidst all the events of the times — indeed, is the one who makes the events and renders the period an epoch in universal history.

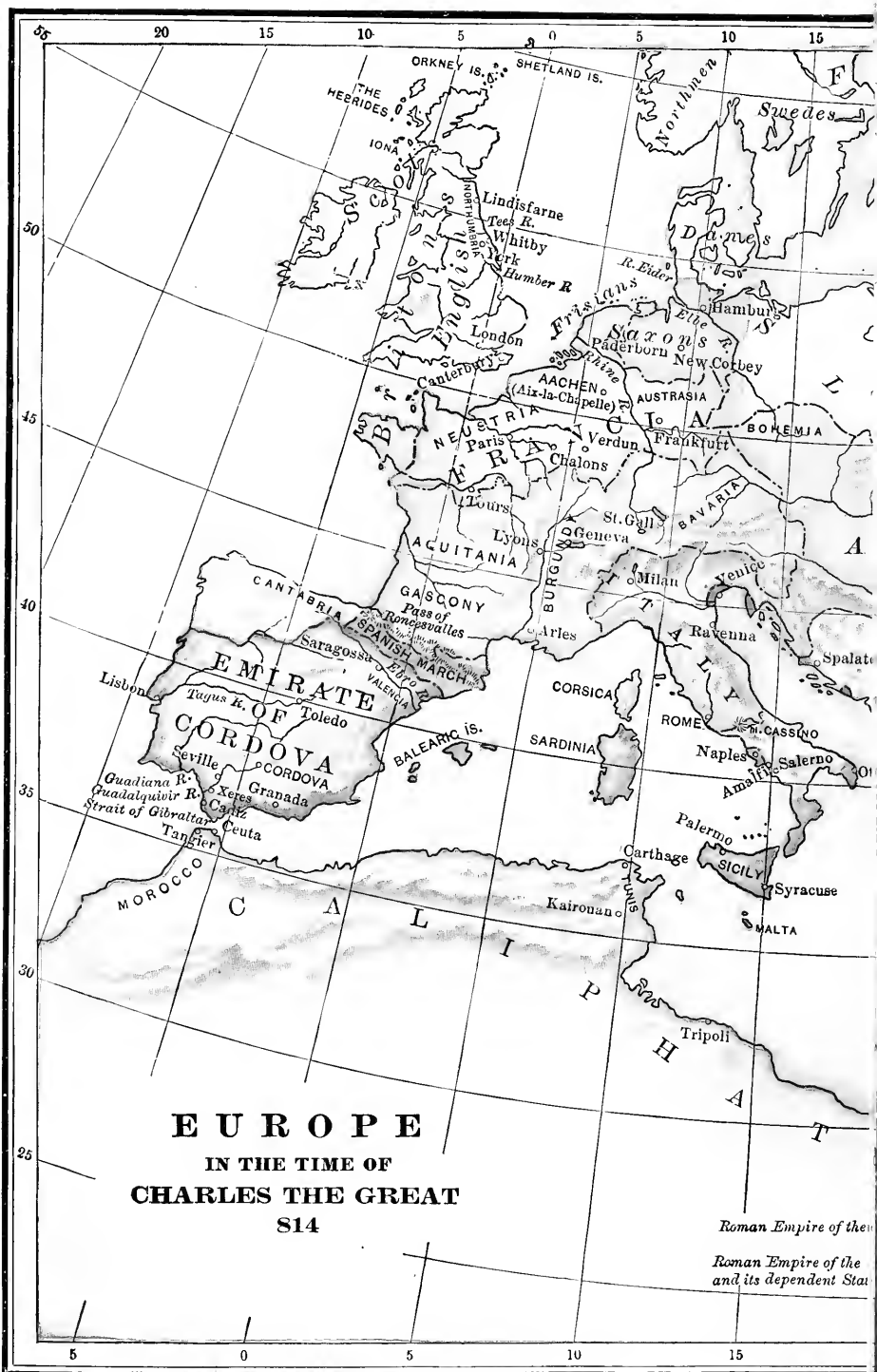
The story of this era affords the key to very much of the subsequent history of western Europe. The mere enumeration of the events which are to claim our attention will illustrate the important and germinal character of the period. We shall tell how the Mayors of the Palace of the Merovingian princes became the actual kings of the Franks; how, through the liberality of the Frankish kings, the popes laid the foundations of their temporal sovereignty; and how Charlemagne restored the Roman Empire in the West, and throughout its extended limits, in the fusion of things Roman and of things Germanic, laid the basis of modern civilization.

**254. How Duke Pippin became King of the Franks (751 A.D.).** Charles Martel, who saved the Christian civilization of western Europe on the field of Tours, although the real head of the Frankish nation, was nominally only an officer of the Merovingian court (sect. 205). He died without ever having borne the title of king, notwithstanding he had exercised all the authority of that office.

But Charles's son, Pippin III, aspired to the regal title and honors. He resolved to depose his titular master and to make himself king.







**EUROPE**  
IN THE TIME OF  
**CHARLES THE GREAT**  
814

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Not deeming it wise, however, to do this without the sanction of the Pope, he sent an embassy to represent to him the state of affairs and to solicit his advice. Mindful of recent favors that he had received at the hands of Pippin, the Pope gave his approval to the proposed scheme by replying that it seemed altogether reasonable that the one who was king in reality should be king also in name. This was sufficient. Childeric—such was the name of the Merovingian king—was straightway deposed, and Pippin, whose own deeds together with those of his illustrious father had done so much for the Frankish nation and for Christendom, was crowned king of the Franks (751 A.D.), and thus became the first of the Carolingian line, the name of his illustrious son Charles (Charlemagne) giving name to the house.

**255. Pippin Helps to Establish the Temporal Power of the Popes (756 A.D.).** In the year 754 A.D. Pope Stephen II, troubled by the king of the Lombards, besought Pippin's aid against the barbarian. Pippin, quick to return the favor which the head of the Church had rendered him in the securing of his crown, straightway interposed in behalf of the Pope. He descended into Italy with an army, expelled the Lombards from their recent conquests, and made a donation to the Pope of the regained lands<sup>1</sup> (756 A.D.). As a symbol of the gift he laid the keys of Ravenna, Rimini, and of many other cities on the tomb of St. Peter.

This endowment may be regarded as having practically laid the basis of the temporal sovereignty of the popes; for although Pope Stephen, as it seems, had already resolved to cast off allegiance to the Eastern emperor and set up an independent Church state, still it is not probable that he could have carried out successfully such an enterprise had he not been aided in his project by the Frankish king.

**256. Charlemagne or Charles the Great.** Pippin was followed by his son Charles<sup>2</sup> (768–814 A.D.), who by the almost unanimous verdict of students of the mediæval period has been pronounced the

<sup>1</sup> The sovereignty of all these lands belonged nominally to the emperor at Constantinople. His claims were ignored by Pippin.

<sup>2</sup> During the first three years of his reign a brother named Carloman was associated with him in the government.

most imposing personage that appears between the fifth and the fifteenth century. "He stands alone," says Hallam, "like a beacon upon a waste, or a rock in the broad ocean." His greatness has erected an enduring monument for itself in his name, the one by which he is best known — Charlemagne.

Charlemagne's long reign of nearly half a century was well filled with military campaigns and conquests by which he so extended the boundaries of his dominions that they came to embrace the greater part of western Europe. But his most noteworthy work was achieved not as a warrior, but as a wise ruler and administrator. He gave personal attention to matters of every kind, public and private; kept a fatherly watch over the affairs of the Church; and established in connection with the cathedrals and monasteries numerous schools, which mark the beginning of a new intellectual life for Western Christendom.

**257. Restoration of the Empire in the West (800 A.D.).** The great historical event of Charles's reign was the conferring upon him by the Pope of the imperial crown of the Cæsars. The circumstances of this famous transaction were these.

Pope Leo III having called upon Charlemagne for aid against a hostile faction at Rome, the king soon appeared in person at the capital and punished summarily the disturbers of the peace of the Church. The gratitude of Leo led him at this time to make a most signal return for the many services of the Frankish king. To understand his act a word of explanation is needed.

For a considerable time a variety of circumstances had been fostering a growing feeling of enmity between the Italians and the emperors at Constantinople. Just at this time, by the crime of the Empress Irene, who had deposed her son (Constantine VI) and put out his eyes that she might have his place, the Byzantine throne was vacant, in the estimation of the Italians, who contended that the crown of the Cæsars could not be worn by a woman. In view of these circumstances Pope Leo and those about him conceived the purpose of taking away from the heretical and effeminate Greeks the imperial crown and bestowing it upon some strong and orthodox and worthy prince in the West.

Now, among all the Teutonic chiefs of Western Christendom there was none who could dispute in claims to the honor with the king of the Franks, the representative of a most illustrious house and the strongest champion of the young Christianity of the West against her pagan foes. Accordingly, as Charles was participating in the solemnities of Christmas Day in the basilica of St. Peter at Rome, the Pope approached the kneeling king, and placing a crown of gold upon his head proclaimed him Emperor and Augustus (800 A.D.).

The intention of Pope Leo was, by a sort of reversal of the act of Constantine the Great, to bring back from the East the seat of the imperial court; but what he really accomplished was a restoration of the line of emperors in the West, which three hundred and twenty-four years before had been ended by Odoacer, when he dethroned Romulus Augustus (sect. 174). We say this was what he actually effected; for the Greeks of the East, disregarding wholly what the Roman people and the Pope had done, maintained their line of emperors just as though nothing had occurred in Italy. So now from this time on for centuries there were, most of the time, two emperors, one in the East and another in the West, each claiming to be the rightful successor of Cæsar Augustus.<sup>1</sup>

This revival of the Empire in the West was one of the most important matters in European history. It gave to the following centuries "a great political ideal," which was the counterpart of the religious ideal of a universal Church embodied in the Papacy, and which was to determine the character of large sections of mediæval history.

<sup>1</sup> From this time on it will be proper for us to use the terms *Western Empire* and *Eastern Empire*. These names should not, however, be employed before this time, for the two parts of the old Roman Empire were simply administrative divisions of a single empire; but we may properly enough speak of the Roman Empire *in* the West, and the Roman Empire *in* the East, or of the Western and Eastern emperors. What it is very essential to note is, that the restoration of the line of the Western emperors actually destroyed the unity of the old Empire, so that from this time on until the destruction of the Eastern Empire in 1453, there were, as we have said in the text, two rival emperors, each in theory having rightful suzerainty of the whole world, whereas the two (or more) emperors in Roman times were the co-rulers of a single and indivisible world empire. See Bryce, *The Holy Roman Empire*.

Charlemagne reigned as emperor only fourteen years. He died 814 A.D., and his empire soon afterwards fell in pieces. It was renewed, however, by Otto the Great of Germany in the year 962 and came to be known as the Holy Roman Empire.

**258. The Revival of the Empire as a Dividing Line in History.** As Pope Leo placed the imperial diadem upon the head of Charles in St. Peter's basilica he cried, "To Charles the Augustus, crowned by God, great and pacific emperor, life and victory." The Roman populace within the church repeated the cry, which was taken up by the Frankish warriors outside. "In that shout was pronounced the union, so long in preparation, so mighty in its consequences, of the Roman and the Teuton, of the memories and the civilization of the South with the fresh energy of the North, and from that moment modern history begins."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bryce, *The Holy Roman Empire*, p. 49. Bryce here uses the phrase *modern history* as comprehending both the mediæval and the modern period. For the moment he conceives history as presenting only two phases, the ancient and the modern.



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# INDEX

## AND PRONOUNCING VOCABULARY

NOTE. In the case of words whose correct pronunciation has not seemed to be clearly indicated by their accentuation and syllabication, the sounds of the letters have been denoted thus: *ā*, like *a* in *grāy*; *ā̃*, like *ā*, only less prolonged; *ǎ*, like *a* in *hǎve*; *ä*, like *a* in *fär*; *ǻ*, like *a* in *all*; *ē*, like *ee* in *meet*; *ē̃*, like *ē*, only less prolonged; *ě*, like *e* in *ěnd*; *ê*, like *e* in *thêre*; *ẽ*, like *e* in *ẽrr*; *ī*, like *i* in *pīne*; *ĩ*, like *i* in *pĩn*; *ō*, like *o* in *nōte*; *ō̃*, like *ō*, only less prolonged; *ǫ*, like *o* in *nǫt*; *ô*, like *o* in *ôrb*; *oo*, like *oo* in *mōon*; *öö*, like *oo* in *fōot*; *ū*, like *u* in *ūse*; *ü*, like the French *u*; *œ* and *æ* have the same sound that *e* would have in the same position; *ε* and *eh*, like *k*; *ç*, like *s*; *g̃*, like *g* in *g̃et*; *g̃*, like *j*; *g̃*, like *z*; *ch*, as in German *ach*; *G* (small capital) as in German *Hamburg*; *ñ*, like *ni* in *minion*; *ñ* denotes the nasal sound in French, being similar to *ng* in *song*.

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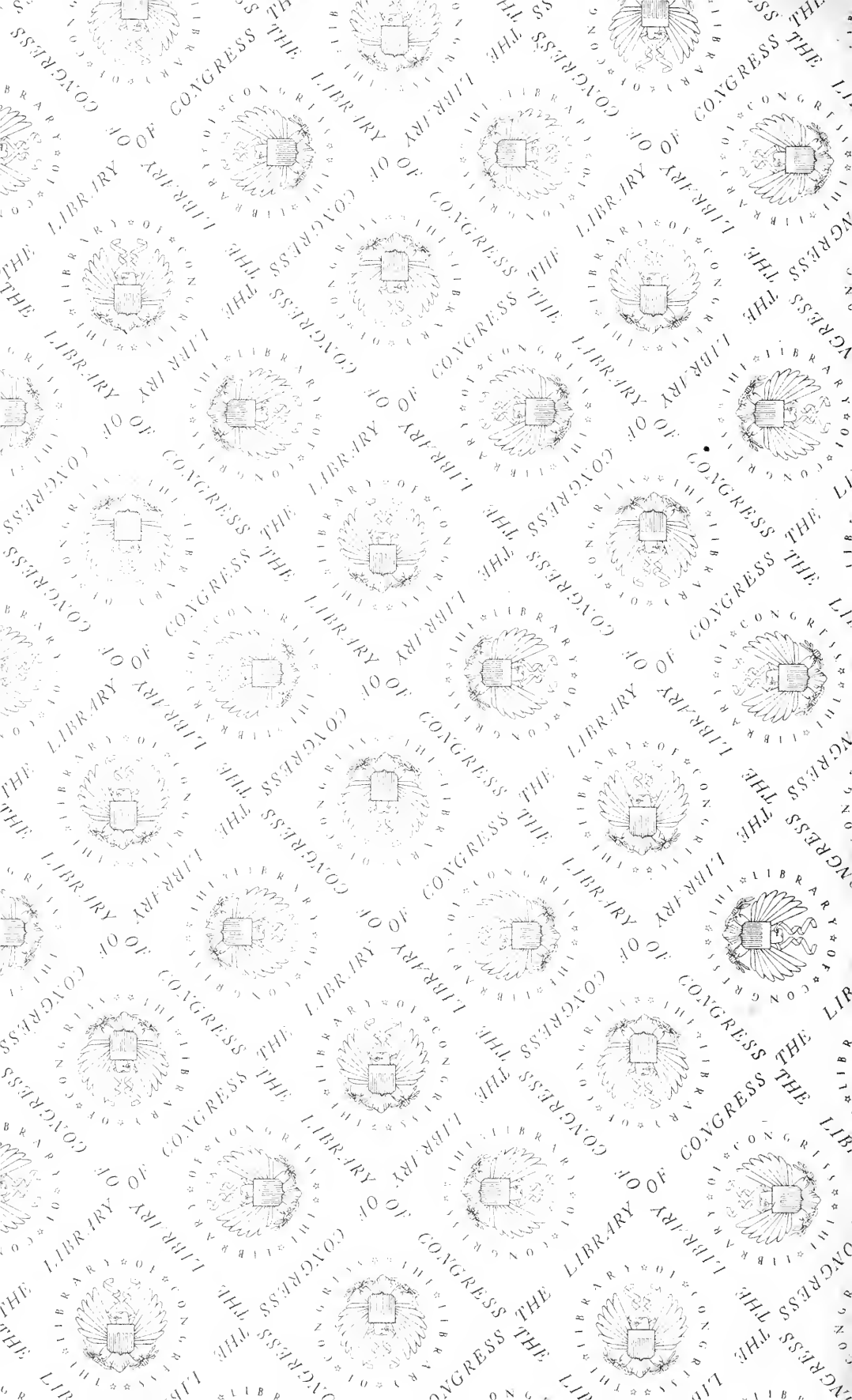
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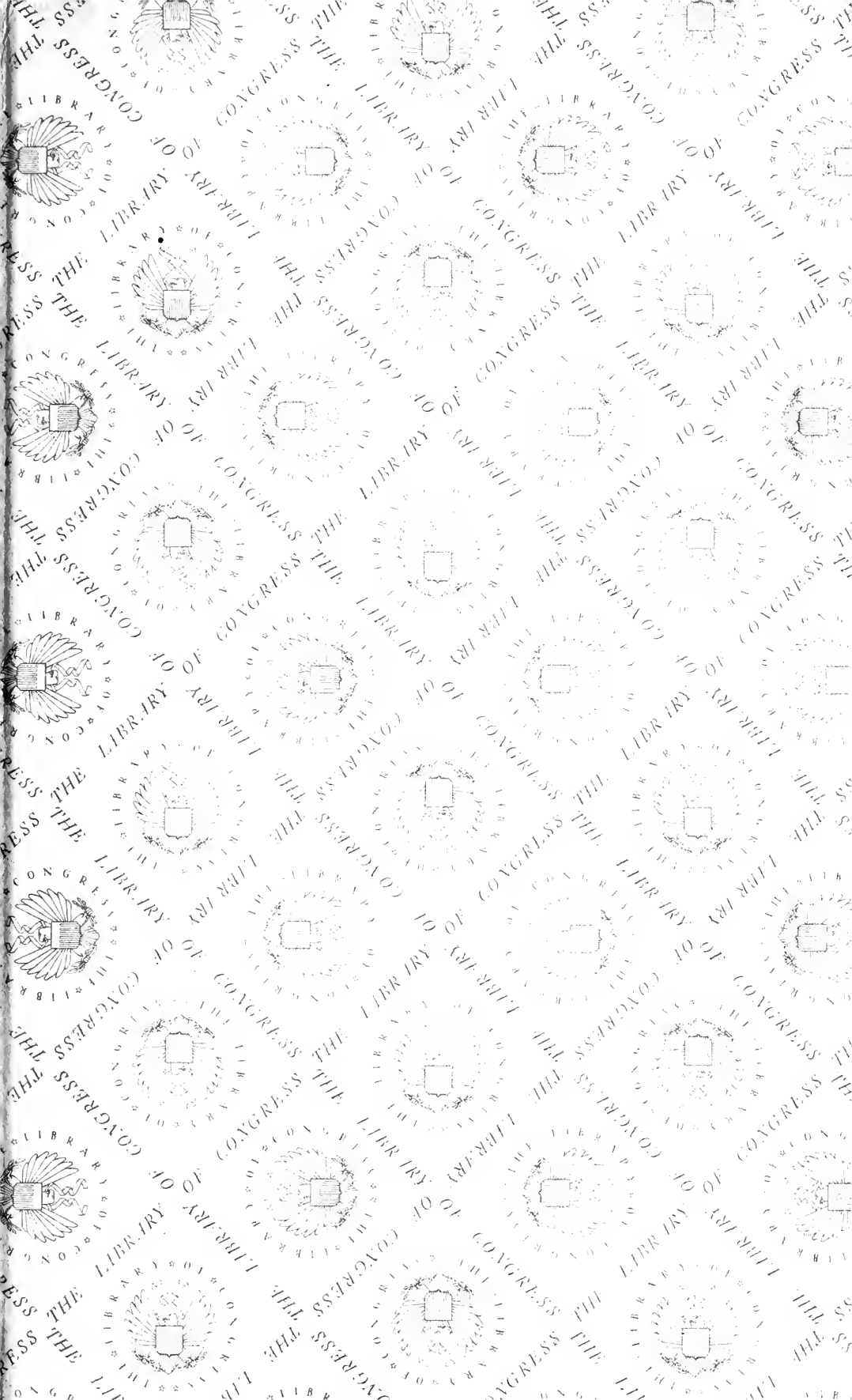
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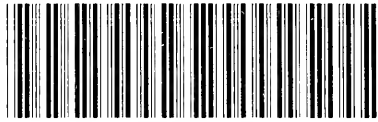
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